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CONTENTS.

	PAGE		PAGE
ASKELON	1	LEBANON	68
BABYLON	5	NAZARETH	72
BETHLEHEM	11	NINEVEH	76
CAPERNAUM	15	PERGAMOS	81
MOUNT CARMEL	19	PETRA	84
DAMASCUS	22	PHILADELPHIA	89
THE DEAD SEA	27	ROME	92
IDOLS OF EGYPT	32	SAMARIA	96
EPHESUS	37	SARDIS	101
TEMPLE OF ISIS, ETHIOPIA .	41	SIDON	104
GAZA	45	SMYRNA	108
JERICO	49	THEBES	112
JERUSALEM	54	THYATIRA	117
THE JORDAN	59	TYRE	120
LAODICEA	64	MOUNT ZION	124



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ASKELON.



FROM the south of Palestine to Mount Carmel, along the coast of the Mediterranean, extends a plain about 120 miles in length, which, under the name of Sharon, was anciently the most lovely and fertile district in the country.¹ It was consequently numerously peopled, and covered with towns and villages. South of this was the land of the Philistines, containing five principal towns or lordships; Gaza, Askelon, Ashdod, Gath, and Ekron; of which Askelon, being the only one situated on the sea-shore, was the most important. There is good reason to suppose that the Philistines, or Cherethites,² were descended from Shem, and that they settled here as

(1) *Isa.* xxxv. 2. It shall blossom abundantly, and rejoice even with joy and singing: the glory of Lebanon shall be given unto it, the excellency of Carmel and Sharon.

(2) 1 *Sam.* xxx. 14. We made an invasion upon the south of the Cherethites, ... and we burned Ziklag with fire.

colonists from Crete. The Septuagint translation of their name, "men of another tribe," certainly indicates their foreign origin; as the fact that they gave the name of Palestine¹ to the whole country, sufficiently proves their political importance. In the time of Moses they were a brave and warlike people;² and in the reign of Saul they not only retained this character, but were much in advance of the Israelites in the arts and manufactures.³ History relates, that at a very early period the king of Askelon led an army against Sidon, took the city, and expelled the inhabitants, who went away and founded Tyre.

As long as the Hebrew commonwealth lasted, the Philistines, by their unprovoked aggressions, continued to be "a thorn in the side" of their neighbours; and, although many times beaten, they were not entirely subdued until the Jews themselves had lost their independence. Like the inhabitants of the more northern cities, Tyre and Sidon, they were much devoted to commerce, Askelon being their seaport; but they likewise paid attention to agriculture,⁴ for which their country, from its fertile character, was well adapted. They were gross idolaters, worshipping the god Dagon⁵ and other idols, and were among the few nations suffered to remain in the land, to try the faith of the Israelites. In the division of the land of Canaan, Askelon was assigned to the tribe of Judah,⁶ but it never remained in their possession for any length of time together.

In consequence of various acts of oppression committed by

(1) Josephus, &c.

(2) *Exod.* xiii. 17. And it came to pass, when Pharaoh had let the people go, that God led them not through the way of the land of the Philistines, although that was near; for God said, Lest peradventure the people repent when they see war, and they return to Egypt.

(3) *1 Sam.* xiii. 19, 20. Now there was no smith found throughout all the land of Israel; . . . but all the Israelites went down to the Philistines, to sharpen every man his share, and his coulter, and his axe, and his mattock.

(4) *Judges* xv. 5. And when he had set the brands on fire, he let them go into the standing corn of the Philistines, and burnt up both the shocks, and also the standing corn, with the vineyards and olives.

(5) *Judges* xvi. 23. Then the lords of the Philistines gathered them together for to offer a great sacrifice unto Dagon their god, and to rejoice; for they said, Our god hath delivered Samson our enemy into our hand.—See also *1 Sam.* v.

(6) *Judges* i. 18. Also Judah took Gaza with the coast thereof, and Askelon with the coast thereof, and Ekron with the coast thereof.

the Philistines on the Israelites, more particularly the taking of their cities¹ and the selling of the inhabitants as slaves to foreign nations,² the prophet Amos foretold that Askelon should be stripped of all political power;³ Zephaniah, that its idolatry should be punished by its being laid desolate;⁴ and Zechariah, announcing the future triumph of Israel, declared that its inhabitants should be exterminated.⁵

Askelon, though strongly fortified, and occupying an important position on the confines of two rival kingdoms, was unable to hold out against the several nations who successively subjugated Palestine; consequently it fell under the dominion of Syria and Egypt, whenever the sovereigns of these countries were in their turn victorious. Herod the Great, though of an Idumean family, was born here, and beautified the city with fountains and baths; it was also, after his death, a favourite residence of his sister Salome. In the beginning of the great war between the Romans and Jews, the latter people, exasperated by the oppression of the Roman governor Florus, rose in rebellion, and laid waste many of the Syrian cities, and among them Askelon; but they met with a severe retaliation, 2,500 of them being massacred in that city alone. Askelon, however, rose again from its ruins; for in the history of the Crusades it is frequently mentioned as a wealthy stronghold, the occupation of which was considered so important, that when its fortifications had been destroyed by Saladin, they were carefully restored by Richard I. A.D. 1270. In the eighth and last crusade it was totally destroyed by the Mahometans,

(1) 2 *Chron.* xxi. 16, 17. Moreover the Lord stirred up against Jehoram the spirit of the Philistines, . . . and they came up into Judah, and brake into it, and carried away all the substance also that was found in the king's house, and his sons also, and his wives, so that there was never a son left him, save Jehoahaz, the youngest of his sons.

(2) *Joel* iii. 6. The children also of Judah, and the children of Jerusalem, have ye sold unto the Grecians, that ye might remove them far from their border.

(3) *Amos* i. 8. And I will cut off the inhabitant from Ashdod, and him that holdeth the sceptre from Askelon; and I will turn mine hand against Ekron, and the remnant of the Philistines shall perish, saith the Lord God.

(4) *Zeph.* ii. 4. For Gaza shall be forsaken, and Askelon a desolation; they shall drive out Ashdod at the noonday, and Ekron shall be rooted up.

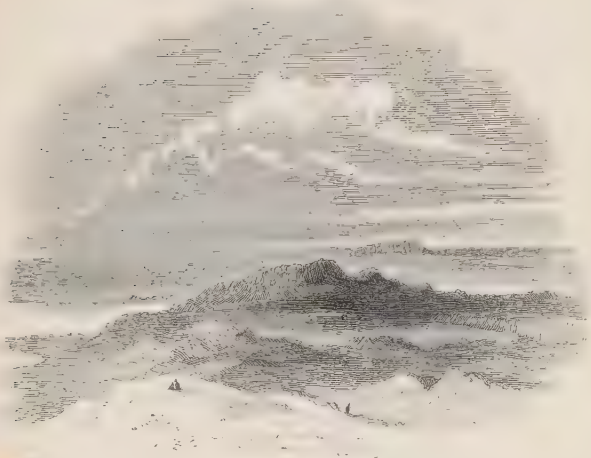
(5) *Zech.* ix. 5. Askelon shall see it, and fear; Gaza also shall see it, and be very sorrowful, and Ekron; for her expectation shall be ashamed; and the king shall perish from Gaza, and Askelon shall not be inhabited.

and the harbour blocked up with stones, to prevent any further invasion by the Christians. No attempt was ever made to rebuild it. In 1610 it was "a place of no note," being merely occupied by a Turkish garrison. It continued to be inhabited for about fifty years after this, but it is now literally "a desolation, without inhabitants."

In its days of prosperity Askelon must have been a strong city ; the walls were built on a ridge of rocks which embraced the town and terminated in the sea, the enclosed area being depressed like an amphitheatre. The sumptuous buildings which adorned the town at the period of the Crusades have been so entirely demolished, that it is not even possible to discover to what order of architecture any one of them belonged ; but there are many mutilated shafts of columns, which show the material employed to have been chiefly grey granite, with here and there a coarse marble or beautiful porphyry. There never was a more striking verification of prophecy than the utter desolation of this formerly important and wealthy town, of which scarcely more is now to be seen than enough to testify that it once did exist.



BABYLON.



ANCIENT Babylonia, the country of which Babylon was the capital, comprised the tract of land which lay between the Tigris and the Euphrates, and which was bounded on the north by Mesopotamia and Assyria, and on the south by the Persian Gulf. This country (originally called Shinar) took its name from the metropolis, which was founded by Nimrod,¹ and was called Babel, from a Hebrew word signifying *to confound*, from the confusion of tongues formerly inflicted on the inhabitants as a punishment for their impious ambition.²

(1) *Gen.* x. 10. And the beginning of his kingdom was Babel, and Erech and Accad, and Calneh, in the land of Shinar.

(2) *Gen.* xi. 2—9. And it came to pass, as they journeyed from the east, that they found a plain in the land of Shinar; and they dwelt there. And they said one to another, Go to, let us make brick, and burn them thoroughly. And they had brick for stone, and slime had they for mortar. And they said, Go to, let us

Babylon consisted of one extensive plain, which was artificially intersected by numerous canals,¹ formed to carry off the annual inundations of the two rivers which bounded it. No records exist of the ancient condition of Babylon, except that it is said to have been enlarged by Semiramis, the wife of Ninus, about 2000 B.C., and doubled in size by Nebuchadnezzar.² Under this monarch, it reached the utmost height of magnificence and grandeur: it was the metropolis of the civilized world, and there flowed into it the riches of almost all lands. In the Old Testament it is styled "the praise of the whole earth,"³ "the glory of kingdoms;"⁴ a description which is amply confirmed by the testimony of profane writers. It was built on a large plain, and was a perfect square, measuring fifteen miles on each side. The walls were 87 feet thick and 350 feet in height, and were built of large bricks, cemented with bitumen, which was found in abundance in the neighbourhood. Outside the wall of the city ran a deep and wide trench filled with water, and crossed on each side by twenty-five bridges, leading to as many gates of brass.⁵ From each gate ran a street fifteen miles long, so that the whole number of streets was fifty, of which twenty-five ran in one direction,

build us a city and a tower, whose top may reach unto heaven; and let us make us a name, lest we be scattered abroad upon the face of the whole earth. And the Lord came down to see the city and the tower, which the children of men builded. And the Lord said, Behold, the people is one, and they have all one language; and this they begin to do: and now nothing will be restrained from them, which they have imagined to do. Go to, let us go down, and there confound their language, that they may not understand one another's speech. So the Lord scattered them abroad from thence upon the face of all the earth: and they left off to build the city. Therefore is the name of it called Babel; because the Lord did there confound the language of all the earth: and from thence did the Lord scatter them abroad upon the face of all the earth.

(1) *Ps.* cxxxvii. 1. By the rivers of Babylon, there we sat down, yea, we wept, when we remembered Zion.—*Jer.* li. 13. O thou that dwellest upon many waters, abundant in treasures, thine end is come, and the measure of thy covetousness.

(2) *Dan.* iv. 30. Is not this great Babylon, that I have built for the house of the kingdom by the might of my power, and for the honour of my majesty?

(3) *Jer.* li. 41. How is Sheshach taken! and how is the praise of the whole earth surprised! how is Babylon become an astonishment among the nations!

(4) *Isa.* xiii. 19. And Babylon, the glory of kingdoms, the beauty of the Chaldees' excellency, shall be as when God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah.

(5) *Isa.* xlv. 2. I will go before thee, and make the crooked places straight: I will break in pieces the gates of brass, and cut in sunder the bars of iron.

and twenty-five in the other, crossing each other at right angles. Thus the whole city was cut into 676 squares, each two miles and a quarter in circuit. The houses were large and lofty, and faced the streets, the space within the squares being devoted to gardens and pleasure-grounds. Through the city flowed the river Euphrates, which was crossed in the middle by a bridge. The river flowed from north to south, and was faced on both banks by a breastwork of bricks, through which, avenues, secured by little gates of brass, led by steps to the transverse streets. Of the ornamental works of art, the hanging gardens were reckoned by the ancients among the seven wonders of the world. They were laid out on tiers of platforms, raised to a great height by rows of arches, and covered with soil sufficient for the growth of large trees. But by far the most interesting structure to the biblical scholar was the temple of Belus, which consisted of eight towers, one built on the other, the lowest being half a mile in compass, and the last 600 feet from the ground, or 120 feet higher than the great pyramid of Egypt. This, there is good reason to suppose, was built around the ruins of the tower of Babel.

Whilst Babylon was in this state of magnificence, it was selected by God to be his instrument for punishing the rebellious Jews, who, neglecting the warning conveyed by the capture of the ten tribes by the Assyrians, pursued their course of idolatry and immorality until they had fulfilled the doom pronounced by Moses 850 years before,¹ and repeated by subsequent prophets.²

(1) *Deut.* xxviii. 36. The Lord shall bring thee, and thy king which thou shalt set over thee, unto a nation which neither thou nor thy fathers have known; and there shalt thou serve other gods, wood and stone, &c.

(2) *Jer.* xxix. 22. And of them shall be taken up a curse by all the captivity of Judah which are in Babylon, saying, The Lord make thee like Zedekiah and like Ahab, whom the king of Babylon roasted in the fire.—*Ezek.* xii. 13. My net also will I spread upon him, and he shall be taken in my snare: and I will bring him to Babylon to the land of the Chaldeans; yet shall he not see it, though he shall die there.—*2 Kings* xx. 16—18. And Isaiah said unto Hezekiah, Hear the word of the Lord. Behold, the days come, that all that is in thine house, and that which thy fathers have laid up in store unto this day, shall be carried into Babylon: nothing shall be left, saith the Lord. And of thy sons that shall issue from thee, which thou shalt beget, shall they take away.

In the year 606 B.C. Jeremiah¹ foretold that the tribe of Judah should be carried captive to Babylon by Nebuchadnezzar, and should remain there for seventy years. In the same year, Jerusalem was taken, the temple partially despoiled, many of the principal inhabitants carried captive to Babylon, and the Jewish king made a vassal of the conqueror.² Jehoiachin,³ the son and successor of Jehoiakim, trod but too closely in his father's steps, and met with a yet severer fate.⁴ The temple was stripped of whatever vessels had remained in it,⁵ and all the people, save the "poorer sort," were carried away, the king among the rest; Zedekiah, his father's brother, being left as nominal sovereign;⁶ and finally, when Zedekiah re-

(1) *Jer.* xxv. 8—11. Therefore thus saith the Lord of hosts; Because ye have not heard my words, behold, I will send and take all the families of the north, saith the Lord, and Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon, my servant, and will bring them against this land, and against the inhabitants thereof, and against all these nations round about, and will utterly destroy them, and make them an astonishment, and an hissing, and perpetual desolations. Moreover I will take from them the voice of mirth, and the voice of gladness, the voice of the bridegroom, and the voice of the bride, the sound of the milstones, and the light of the candle. And this whole land shall be a desolation, and an astonishment; and these nations shall serve the king of Babylon seventy years.

(2) *Dan.* i. 1—4. In the third year of the reign of Jehoiakim king of Judah came Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon unto Jerusalem, and besieged it. And the Lord gave Jehoiakim king of Judah into his hand, with part of the vessels of the house of God: which he carried into the land of Shinar to the house of his god; and he brought the vessels into the treasure house of his god. And the king spake unto Ashpenaz the master of his eunuchs, that he should bring certain of the children of Israel, and of the king's seed, and of the princes; children in whom was no blemish, but well-favoured, and skilful in all wisdom, and cunning in knowledge, and understanding science, and such as had ability in them to stand in the king's palace, and whom they might teach the learning and the tongue of the Chaldeans.

(3) Called also Jechoniah and Coniah.

(4) *Jer.* xxvii. 24—27. As I live, saith the Lord, though Coniah the son of Jehoiakim king of Judah were the signet upon my right hand, yet would I pluck thee thence; and I will give thee into the hand of them that seek thy life, and into the hand of them whose face thou fearest, even into the hand of Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon, and into the hand of the Chaldeans. And I will cast thee out, and thy mother that bare thee, into another country, where ye were not born; and there shall ye die. But to the land whereunto they desire to return, thither shall they not return.

(5) *Jer.* xxvii. 21, 22. Yea, thus saith the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel, concerning the vessels that remain in the house of the Lord, and in the house of the king of Judah and of Jerusalem; they shall be carried to Babylon, and there shall they be until the day that I visit them, saith the Lord; then will I bring them up, and restore them to this place.

(6) 2 *Kings* xxiv. 11—17. And Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon came against

belled against his master, he too was taken by Nebuchadnezzar, his eyes were put out,¹ and he was carried captive to Babylon. For seventy years from the capture of Jehoiakim, the land of Judah enjoyed her sabbatic years;² and at the expiration of that time the vengeance of God overtook the no less guilty city that had enslaved it, for in the reign of Belshazzar, or Nabonadius, the grandson of Nebuchadnezzar,³ Cyrus, nephew of Darius the Mede, (or Cyaxáres,) came from the north⁴ with an army, and having laid siege to Babylon, took it in the manner described in Daniel v., whilst the inhabitants were feasting.⁵ Grecian historians confirm the account given in the sacred volume, and add that Cyrus diverted the waters of the river into an artificial lake,⁶ and entered through

the city, and his servants did besiege it. And Jehoiachin the king of Judah went out to the king of Babylon, he, and his mother, and his servants, and his princes, and his officers: and the king of Babylon took him in the eighth year of his reign. And he carried out thence all the treasures of the house of the Lord, and the treasures of the king's house, and cut in pieces all the vessels of gold which Solomon king of Israel had made in the temple of the Lord, as the Lord had said. And he carried away all Jerusalem, and all the princes, and all the mighty men of valour, even ten thousand captives, and all the craftsmen and smiths: none remained, save the poorest sort of the people of the land. And he carried away Jehoiachin to Babylon, and the king's mother, and the king's wives, and his officers, and the mighty of the land, those carried he into captivity from Jerusalem to Babylon. And all the men of might, even seven thousand, and craftsmen and smiths a thousand, all that were strong and apt for war, even them the king of Babylon brought captive to Babylon. And the king of Babylon made Mattaniah his father's brother king in his stead, and changed his name to Zedekiah.

(1) 2 *Kings* xxv. 7. And they slew the sons of Zedekiah before his eyes, and put out the eyes of Zedekiah, and bound him with fetters of brass, and carried him to Babylon.

(2) *Levit.* xxv. 3, 4. Six years thou shalt sow thy field, and six years thou shalt prune thy vineyard, and gather in the fruit thereof; but in the seventh year shall be a sabbath of rest unto the land, a sabbath for the Lord: thou shalt neither sow thy field, nor prune thy vineyard.—*Levit.* xxvi. 34, 35. Then shall the land enjoy her sabbaths, as long as it lieth desolate, and ye be in your enemies' land; even then shall the land rest, and enjoy her sabbaths. As long as it lieth desolate it shall rest; because it did not rest in your sabbaths, when ye dwelt upon it.—2 *Chron.* xxxvi. 21. To fulfil the word of the Lord by the mouth of Jeremiah, until the land had enjoyed her sabbaths: for as long as she lay desolate she kept sabbath, to fulfil threescore and ten years.

(3) *Dan.* v. 2. His father (*marginal reading*, grandfather) Nebuchadnezzar.

(4) *Jer.* l. 41. Behold, a people shall come from the north, and a great nation, and many kings shall be raised up from the coasts of the earth.

(5) *Jer.* li. 39. In their heat I will make their feasts, and I will make them drunken, that they may rejoice, and sleep a perpetual sleep, and not wake, saith the Lord.

(6) *Jer.* l. 38. A drought is upon her waters; and they shall be dried up.

its deserted channel ; and that his soldiers penetrated into the city through the wicket gates which led from the streets, and which were left open¹ by the carelessness of the guards. Though Babylon was not immediately destroyed, the beginning of its decay must be dated from this event. The river was never afterwards restored to its wonted channel, though several efforts were made to effect this object ; consequently the adjacent country became a marsh, and assumed the appearance prophetically described by Isaiah and Jeremiah.² The accounts given by modern travellers of the present appearance of Babylon are little more than a repetition of the prophecies quoted above. It is an uninhabited mass of heaps, intersected with marshes and swamps, the only object of interest being the *highest* of the heaps, called Birs Nimrod, which is supposed to be the ruin of the temple of Belus, and therefore equally a monument of the pride of Babylon and the presumption of Babel.

(1) *Isa.* xlv. 1. Thus saith the Lord to his anointed, to Cyrus, whose right hand I have holden, to subdue nations before him ; and I will loose the loins of kings, to open before him the two-leaved gates ; and the gates shall not be shut.

(2) *Isa.* xliii. 19—22. And Babylon, the glory of kingdoms, the beauty of the Chaldees' excellency, shall be as when God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah. It shall never be inhabited, neither shall it be dwelt in from generation to generation : neither shall the Arabian pitch tent there ; neither shall the shepherds make their fold there. But wild beasts of the desert shall lie there ; and their houses shall be full of doleful creatures ; and owls shall dwell there, and satyrs shall dance there. And the wild beasts of the islands shall cry in their desolate houses, and dragons in their pleasant palaces : and her time is near to come, and her days shall not be prolonged.—*Isa.* xiv. 23. I will also make it a possession for the bittern, and pools of water : and I will sweep it with the besom of destruction, saith the Lord of hosts.—*Jer.* xxv. 11—13. And this whole land shall be a desolation, and an astonishment ; and these nations shall serve the king of Babylon seventy years. And it shall come to pass, when seventy years are accomplished, that I will punish the king of Babylon, and that nation, saith the Lord, for their iniquity, and the land of the Chaldeans, and will make it perpetual desolations. And I will bring upon that land all my words which I have pronounced against it, even all that is written in this book, which Jeremiah hath prophesied against all the nations. *Jer.* l. 38, &c.

BETHLEHEM.



THE first mention of Ephrath, or Bethlehem, which occurs in the Holy Scriptures, is connected with an affecting incident, the death of Jacob's favourite wife Rachel, as he was on his way to present her to his father, after his long banishment from his native land.¹ Bethlehem was also the scene of the touching story of Ruth; here too David was born, and, before his elevation to the lofty position in which "his father's children should bow down before him,"² here he fed his father's sheep.³ On these accounts, Bethlehem was

(1) *Gen.* xxxv. 19. And Rachel died, and was buried in the way to Ephrath, which is Bethlehem.

(2) *Gen.* xlix. 8. Judah, thou art he whom thy brethren shall praise: thy hand shall be in the neck of thine enemies; thy father's children shall bow down before thee.

(3) 1 *Sam.* xvii. 15. But David went and returned from Saul to feed his father's sheep at Beth-lehem.

regarded with peculiar interest by the Jews, and, though it was "little among the thousands of Judah,"¹ will ever be associated with the most pleasing recollections in the minds of Christians; for here, "good tidings of great joy" were announced to shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flocks by night:² here the Divine Saviour first appeared, veiled in human flesh: here the long-promised "star of Jacob"³ pointed to Him who claimed the homage of the world: and here the first martyrs for the Lord Jesus Christ shed their innocent blood,⁴ and fulfilled the mysterious prediction of the ancient prophet.⁵ In the book of Judges,⁶ this city is called Bethlehem-Judah, to distinguish it from another of the same name, in Zebulun.⁷ It was never a place of much importance; but it is worthy of note, that though described by the prophet Micah as "little among the thousands," it was not "the least;" for it appears from the book of Ezra,⁸ that inconsiderable as was the number of Bethlehemites who returned from the Babylonian captivity, several of the cities sent back a smaller number.⁹

Situated in the midst of a pastoral district, and at no period of its history noted either for wealth or military strength, its

(1) *Micah* v. 2. But thou, Beth-lehem Ephratah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall he come forth unto me that is to be ruler in Israel: whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting.

(2) *Luke* ii. 8—10. And there were in the same country shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night. And, lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them; and they were sore afraid. And the angel said unto them, Fear not: for behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people.

(3) *Numb.* xxiv. 17. There shall come a Star out of Jacob, and a Sceptre shall rise out of Israel.

(4) *Matt.* ii. 16. Then Herod, when he saw that he was mocked of the wise men, was exceeding wroth, and sent forth, and slew all the children that were in Bethlehem, and in all the coasts thereof, from two years old and under, according to the time which he had diligently inquired of the wise men.

(5) *Jer.* xxxi. 15. A voice was heard in Ramah, lamentation, and bitter weeping; Rahel weeping for her children refused to be comforted for her children, because they were not.

(6) *Judges* xvii. 7. And there was a young man out of Beth-lehem-judah of the family of Judah, who was a Levite, and he sojourned there.

(7) *Josh.* xix. 15. And Kattath, and Nahallal, and Shimron, and Idalah, and Beth-lehem: twelve cities with their villages.

(8) *Ezra* ii. 21. The children of Beth-lehem, an hundred twenty and three.

(9) *Ezra* ii. 18. The children of Jorah, an hundred and twelve.

name is not mixed up with any of the political revolutions of Judea : nor, on the other hand, does it appear to have been subjected to any of the terrific reverses which befel so many of the neighbouring places : its noiseless history accords well with the humble occupation of its inhabitants, and the retiring character of the Redeemer. Little mention is made of it in the New Testament ; for the Jews were scarcely aware of our Saviour's wonderful birth in this city, and knew him only as "Jesus of Nazareth."¹ It lay on a little eminence in the mountains of Judea, six miles south-east of Jerusalem, in a neighbourhood remarkable for its abundant produce of corn, wine, and oil ; hence it derived its name, Bethlehem, *the house of bread*, Ephratah, *the fruitful*. It is now a large village, beautifully situated on the brow of a hill, which commands an extensive view of a richly-wooded country, scarcely less fruitful than it was of old. The houses are built for the most part of clay and brick, and are left at present to the undisturbed possession of the Christians. There are about three thousand inhabitants, who devote their time principally to the manufacture of beads, crosses, and other relics, which they sell to the numerous pilgrims and travellers who frequent the place. The Church of the Nativity, said to have been built by the Empress Helena, is still standing, and adjoining it is a Latin Convent. The Church has suffered much from the ravages of time, but still bears manifest evidence of its Grecian origin. It is a spacious and lofty building, supported by Corinthian columns, and roofed with cedar wood, which is still in good preservation. "The Grotto of the Nativity" is under-ground, and is entered by two spiral staircases : it is hewn out of the solid rock, which is concealed at the sides by silk curtains, and the floor is inlaid with marble ; the roof is of the natural stone. A rich altar is erected over the place where the Saviour was born, and the very spot is marked by a large silver star. The glory, of marble and jasper, around the star, has a Latin inscription : "In this spot Jesus Christ was born of the Virgin Mary." A recess is pointed out to the visitor, as the Sepulchre of the

(1) *John* vii. 41, 42. But some said, Shall Christ come out of Galilee? Hath not the scripture said, That Christ cometh of the seed of David, and out of the town of Bethlehem, where David was ?

Holy Innocents, and another as the grotto in which St. Jerome passed the greater part of his life. That this is the real scene of the Nativity, there can be little doubt; there has never been any dispute about the site of Bethlehem, and subterraneous stables are still common in the East; nor is there any doubt that the learned Jerome here resided for a long time, and composed most of his valuable works; but that the murdered Innocents were buried here is most improbable. Nevertheless, this is undoubtedly one of the most interesting spots in Palestine; though pious travellers regret that it was not left in its original rude simplicity, unadorned by silk and costly marble. Better that it had remained as when the shepherds beheld the Lord,—a memorial of that lowliness of spirit that ever loved the poor and gentle things of this world, rather than the rich and mighty. Early in the morning of Christmas-day, some of the Christians are in the habit of repairing to the fields, where the shepherds watched their flocks, and of indulging in the holy feelings which the place and time are calculated to excite. The spot which tradition has consecrated is a most lovely one: beneath two ancient trees the traveller may sit and meditate on the event which has thrown light on his gloomy path; below him flows the stream from which David longed to drink, when hemmed in by the Philistines,¹ still a fountain of delicious water; and at no great distance stands the tomb of the loved and faithful wife, whom the Patriarch so affectionately remembered, even on his death-bed. “Rachel died by me in the land of Canaan in the way, and I buried her there in the way of Ephrath.”²

(1) 2 *Sam.* xxiii. 15. And David longed, and said, Oh that one would give me drink of the water of the well of Beth-lehem, which is by the gate!

(2) *Gen.* xlviii. 7.

CAPERNAUM.



CAPERNAUM, a city of Galilee, situated on the north-western side of the Lake of Gennesareth, and on the borders of the tribes of Zebulun and Naphtali, is memorable as having been, more than any other place, the residence of our Blessed Lord after his expulsion from Nazareth.¹ There he taught by example the duty of rendering obedience to the rulers appointed by God,² and here he performed many of his

(1) *Luke* iv. 28—31. And all they in the synagogue, when they heard these things, were filled with wrath, and rose up, and thrust him out of the city, and led him unto the brow of the hill whereon their city was built, that they might cast him down headlong. But he passing through the midst of them went his way, and came down to Capernaum, a city of Galilee.

(2) *Matt.* xvii. 24—27. And when they were come to Capernaum, they that received tribute-money came to Peter, and said, Doth not your master pay tribute? He saith, Yes. And when he was come into the house, Jesus prevented him, saying, What thinkest thou, Simon? of whom do the kings of the earth take custom or

miracles.¹ As it was situated near the lake, there was a custom-house in the street between the city and the landing-place, at which taxes were levied on the goods conveyed across. Levi, one of the collectors of this tax, was selected by our Saviour to be an Apostle, under the well-known name of Matthew.²

Nothing is known of its ancient history, and so entirely is our Saviour's denunciation fulfilled, "that it should be brought down to hell," that its very site is uncertain. Buckland is of opinion, that it may have stood at a place called Tal-hewn, where there is a station of Arabs, and where there still exist the ruins of an important town, scattered over a wide space. The foundations of a large and magnificent edifice are still to be traced here, though there does not remain enough of the building itself to decide whether it was a temple or a palace. It appears to have been about two hundred paces in length and sixty in breadth, presenting its narrow part to the lake. Within this area are seen large blocks of sculptured stone, and among them two masses which look like panels of some highly decorated wall: at least twenty pedestals of columns occupy their original places, and many others are overthrown near this edifice; and close upon the edge of the lake are the walls of a solid building, evidently constructed with fragments of the adjacent ruins; over this the Arabs have constructed a flat terrace, and have thus converted it into a rude dwelling. The remains of a bath are still in existence, the cistern and channels being yet perfect; it is attached to an ancient dwelling-house built of large blocks of stone, and scattered around are numerous fragments of white marble, proving the costly character of the architecture. The name Tal-hewn is supposed to have some affinity with Dalmanutha, a name

tribute? of their own children, or of strangers? Peter saith unto him, Of strangers. Jesus saith unto him, Then are the children free. Notwithstanding, lest we should offend them, go thou to the sea, and cast an hook, and take up the fish that first cometh up; and when thou hast opened his mouth, thou shalt find a piece of money: that take, and give unto them for me and thee.

(1) *Mark* i. 21—45. *John* iv. 46—54.

(2) *Luke* v. 27. And after these things he went forth, and saw a publican, named Levi, sitting at the receipt of custom: and he said unto him, Follow me.—*Matt.* ix. 9. And as Jesus passed forth from thence, he saw a man, named Matthew, sitting at the receipt of custom: and he saith unto him, Follow me. And he arose, and followed him.

given in the Gospel to the country around Capernaum.¹ The lake on which it stands, called also the sea of Chinnereth,² the sea of Galilee,³ and the lake of Tiberias,⁴ is described by Josephus as remarkable for the sweetness, purity, and coolness of its waters, and for the abundance and variety of its fish. There were fleets of some force on the lake during the wars of the Jews with the Romans, and very bloody battles were fought between them. It was much frequented by fishing-boats in our Saviour's time, and it was from among the fishermen of Gennesareth that he selected most of his Apostles. It lies very deep among hills which formerly were fruitful ; and from its position, it is very liable to dangerous squalls, which often come on suddenly.⁵ The Jordan enters it on the north, and passes through it, with a current which is perceptible throughout its whole course.

The borders of the lake were anciently well peopled, being covered with towns and villages ; but now they are almost desolate, and the fish and water-fowl are but little disturbed. Its appearance from Capernaum is still grand ; but the barren aspect of the mountains on each side, and the total absence of wood, give a cast of dulness to the view ; and this is increased to melancholy by the dead calm of its waters and the silence which reigns throughout its whole extent, where not a boat or vessel of any kind is to be found. Fish are caught by casting nets from the beach, a method which yields a small quantity compared to what would be obtained by boats ; hence they are scarce, and as dear as meat.

Dr. Robinson fixes the site of Capernaum further to the south than Tal-hewn, in a place marked only by a mound of ruins, and near a spring which he supposes to be the same

(1) *Mark* viii. 10. And straightway he entered into a ship with his disciples, and came into the parts of Dalmanutha.

(2) *Numb.* xxxiv. 11. And the border shall descend, and shall reach unto the side of the sea of Chinnereth eastward.

(3) *Mark* i. 16. Now as he walked by the sea of Galilee, he saw Simon and Andrew his brother casting a net into the sea.

(4) *John* vi. 1. After these things Jesus went over the sea of Galilee, which is the sea of Tiberias.

(5) *Mark* iv. 37. And there arose a great storm of wind, and the waves beat into the ship, so that it was now full.

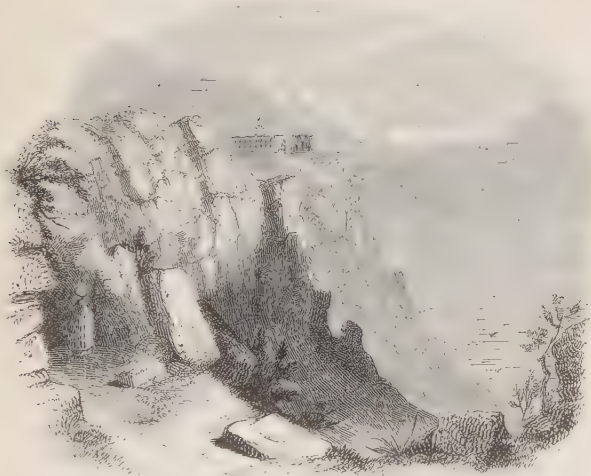
with a fountain which Josephus mentions under the name of Capharnaum ; but, in either case, the city, which was the frequent witness of the Messiah's mighty works, and which was formerly "exalted unto heaven" in magnificence and pride, is now utterly cast down.¹

It is a solemn fact, the voice of which ought to be listened to with attention, that there is no place mentioned in the New Testament as having rejected the mission of the Saviour, but bears evidence in a remarkable degree, either in its history or present condition, of the wrath of God : and as surely as the denunciations of old were fulfilled against the guilty cities that put out from their dwellings the candle of the Lord, so surely, we must remember, will still more awful threatenings be fulfilled against us, if we neglect to profit by the light that shines at present so brightly upon the world.

(1) *Matt. xi. 23.* And thou, Capernaum, which art exalted unto heaven, shalt be brought down to hell : for if the mighty works which have been done in thee, had been done in Sodom, it would have remained until this day.



MOUNT CARMEL.



SOUTH-EAST of Mount Lebanon, a lofty promontory, the only one of any size in Palestine, stretches into the Mediterranean Sea. The range of hills of which it is the extremity extends inland for more than twenty miles, being separated from the sea on the north by a large, fertile, and beautiful plain. This promontory is Carmel, the scene of the destruction of the prophets of Baal, and the spot from which Elijah's prayer for rain was heard and answered.¹ The meaning of the name is "fruitful field," a title which it well merits, the climate being most delightful, and the soil rich with luxuriant vegetation ; hence Carmel is frequently made a prophetic type of beauty and prosperity, and the prophecies in which mention of it occurs, are not to be understood to allude so much to Carmel itself, as to the prosperous state of which it was the symbol. Thus the passages, "Thine head upon thee is like

(1) 1 *Kings* xviii.

Carmel,"¹ and, "The excellency of Carmel shall be given unto it,"² are descriptive of the future glory of the Church : and on the other hand, when it is said that "Carmel shall shake off its fruits,"³ we are to understand that the enemies of the Church shall meet with a reverse, contrasting terribly with their former prosperity.

The promontory in which mount Carmel terminates, is about 1500 feet high : its summit is covered with pines and oaks, and further down are olives and laurel trees in luxuriant abundance. It gives rise to a multitude of crystal brooks, the largest of which issues from the so-called "Fountain of Elijah;" these all hurry along, between banks thickly overgrown with bushes, to the Kishon, the river which, after having traversed the fertile and beautiful plain of Esdraelon, falls into the bay of Acre. Carmel on the south-east unites with the mountains of Samaria; and the middle of the range, where it consists of varied hills and dales, adorned with shady groves and cool fountains, is said to be excelled in richness and depth of soil by no country in the earth. No mountain in or around Palestine retains so much of its ancient beauty; every species of tillage flourishes here to admiration, the surface is covered with a rich and constant verdure, and two or three villages and some scattered cottages add to the beauty of the scene. The mountain itself being of limestone, a kind of rock which frequently abounds in caves, a vast number of these are found throughout all parts of it, as many, it is said, as two thousand. In one tract, called "the Monk's" cavern, there are four hundred adjacent to each other, furnished with windows and places for sleeping, hewn out of the rock. The entrance to many of these is so narrow, that only a single person can creep in at a time, and is immediately out of sight unless closely followed. This may serve to give a clearer idea of what is meant in Amos ix. 3, where the Lord says of those who endeavour to escape his punishment : "Though they hide themselves in the top of Carmel, I will search and take them

(1) *Cant.* vii. 5.

(2) *Isa.* xxxv. 2. The glory of Lebanon shall be given unto it, the excellency of Carmel and Sharon.

(3) *Isa.* xxxiii. 9. The earth mourneth and languisheth : Lebanon is ashamed and hewn down : Sharon is like a wilderness; and Bashan and Carmel shake off their fruits.

out thence." These caves were in very ancient times the abodes of prophets and other religious persons. The prophets Elijah and Elisha often resorted thither ;¹ to the present day there exists, in the side of the mountain which faces the sea, a cavern which is much venerated by the people : it is approached by a path cut in the rock. It is called the "School of the Prophets." To its shelter and privacy Elijah is said to have fled from the pursuit of his enemies, and the retreat is worthy to be a prophet's refuge. Its solitude is deep ; the aspect of nature around is wild and lone, and beneath is the sea. The entrance is partly screened by fig-trees and vines ; within is a lofty excavation of beautiful proportions, at least fifty feet long, with a recess on one side : here the prophet is believed to have taught his disciples and the sons of the prophets. Not far from this spot are the remains of a handsome church, built by the Empress Helena at the time she made her pilgrimage to Jerusalem. On the brink of the mountain, and immediately above Elijah's cave, is a convent, belonging to the order of monks called, from their place of settlement, Carmelites. The body appears to have been composed originally of pious hermits, who selected the spot as having been frequented of old by the prophets Elijah and Elisha. They have long been noted for their hospitality to strangers, their building having been fitted up with beds and every accommodation. It was pillaged and destroyed by the Arabs after the retreat of the French army from the siege of Acre, who used it as a hospital for their sick and wounded ; but it has since been rebuilt. It is a spacious and handsome building of solid stone, and two stories high. In the centre is the church, the dome of which is seen above the flat roof ; the principal altar is placed over the cave so long held sacred as the retreat of Elijah. Travellers, who have enjoyed the hospitality of the Carmelites, speak in high terms of praise of their frank kindness and generosity, and scarcely less highly of the cleanliness and decency of their apartments, qualities which in the East are rarely to be met with.

(1) *2 Kings* ii. 25. And he went from thence to mount Carmel, and from thence he returned to Samaria.—*2 Kings* iv. 25. So she went and came unto the man of God to mount Carmel.

DAMASCUS.



DAMASCUS is one of the most ancient cities in the world, being mentioned as the birth-place of Eliezer, Abraham's steward.¹ The modern Arabs, according to their common practice of giving to a capital city the name of the country, call it El-Sham, or Syria. It lies on the river Barrada (either the Abana or Pharpar of the Bible),² at the eastern foot of Anti-Libanus, and from six to eight days journey from Jerusalem.

Its origin is lost in antiquity, but it was held in high repute at a very early period, as a great and sacred city, conspicuous for the beauty of its temples, the timeliness of its seasons, the profusion of its waters, and the richness of its soil. In the time of David, it was an independent state of such importance, that its alliance was deemed worthy of being sought

(1) *Gen.* xv. 2. The steward of my house is this Eliezer of Damascus.

(2) *2 Kings* v. 12. Are not Abana and Pharpar, rivers of Damascus, better than all the waters of Israel?

by foreign powers ; but it was reduced to subjection by that monarch.¹ The Israelites did not long remain masters of Damascus, for, in the reign of Solomon, Rezon headed a successful revolt, and engaged in continual hostilities against Israel.² The separation of the kingdoms of Judah and Israel occasioned many wars, in one of which Asa, king of Judah, requested succour of Benhadad, king of Damascus, against Baasha, king of Israel, and instigated him to the invasion of the enemy's country ; the result was that a considerable part of northern Israel fell into the hands of the foreign monarch. Benhadad, "Son of Hadad," (the name of a Syro-Phœnician idol,) appears to have been a common title of the kings of Damascus, as Pharaoh was of the kings of Egypt, and Darius of the kings of Persia ; for another king of the same name was defeated by Ahab, king of Israel, who admitted him into an impious league, and was consequently threatened with the loss of his life and kingdom.³ The same monarch renewed the war against Israel in the reign of Jehoram, but all his plans were frustrated, being made known to Jehoram by the prophet Elisha.⁴ On another occasion, the Israelites were miraculously delivered from Benhadad and his host, who suddenly took flight under the impression that a noise of chariots and horses which they heard was occasioned by the arrival of an army to help

(1) 2 *Sam.* viii. 5, 6. And when the Syrians of Damascus came to succour Hadadezer king of Zobah, David slew of the Syrians two and twenty thousand men. Then David put garrisons in Syria of Damascus : and the Syrians became servants to David, and brought gifts.

(2) 1 *Kings* xi. 23—25. And God stirred him up another adversary, Rezon the son of Eliadah, which fled from his lord Hadadezer king of Zobah : and he gathered men unto him, and became captain over a band, when David slew them of Zobah : and they went to Damascus, and dwelt therein, and reigned in Damascus. And he was an adversary to Israel all the days of Solomon, beside the mischief that Hadad did : and he abhorred Israel, and reigned over Syria.

(3) 1 *Kings* xx.

(4) 2 *Kings* vi. 8—12. Then the king of Syria warred against Israel, and took counsel with his servants, saying, In such and such a place shall be my camp. And the man of God sent unto the king of Israel, saying, Beware that thou pass not such a place ; for thither the Syrians are come down. And the king of Israel sent to the place which the man of God told him, and warned him of, and saved himself there, not once nor twice. Therefore the heart of the king of Syria was sore troubled for this thing ; and he called his servants, and said unto them, Will ye not shew me which of us is for the king of Israel ? And one of his servants said, None, my lord, O king : but Elisha, the prophet that is in Israel, telleth the king of Israel the words that thou speakest in thy bedchamber.

the enemy.¹ Benhadad was murdered by Hazael, who usurped the throne,² and continued the war against Israel with success;³ but on his death, his son, a third Benhadad, succeeded him, and was thrice defeated by Jehoash, according to the prophecy of Elisha,⁴ and all the captured cities of Israel were recovered.⁵ Subsequently, Rezin, king of Damascus, entered into alliance with Pekah, king of Israel, and having declared war against Judah, laid siege to Jerusalem, but failed; Ahaz, king of Judah, purchased the aid of Tiglath-pileser, king of Assyria, who fell on Damascus, took it, slew the king, and added the territory to his own kingdom.⁶ On the downfall of the Assyrian monarchy, Damascus became a province of Babylon, and subsequently of the Persian and Macedonian empires. Having shared in all the reverses of the stormy period which succeeded,

(1) *2 Kings* vii. 6. For the Lord had made the host of the Syrians to hear a noise of chariots, and a noise of horses, even the noise of a great host: and they said one to another, Lo, the king of Israel hath hired against us the kings of the Hittites, and the kings of the Egyptians, to come upon us.

(2) *2 Kings* viii. 15. And it came to pass on the morrow, that he took a thick cloth, and dipped it in water, and spread it on his face, so that he died: and Hazael reigned in his stead.

(3) *2 Kings* xiii. 3. And the anger of the Lord was kindled against Israel, and he delivered them into the hand of Hazael king of Syria, and into the hand of Benhadad the son of Hazael, all their days.

(4) *2 Kings* xiii. 17—19. And he said, Open the window eastward. And he opened it. Then Elisha said, Shoot. And he shot. And he said, The arrow of the Lord's deliverance, and the arrow of deliverance from Syria: for thou shalt smite the Syrians in Aphek, till thou have consumed them. And he said, Take the arrows. And he took them. And he said unto the king of Israel, Smite upon the ground. And he smote thrice, and stayed. And the man of God was wroth with him, and said, Thou shouldest have smitten five or six times; then hadst thou smitten Syria till thou hadst consumed it: whereas now thou shalt smite Syria but thrice.

(5) *2 Kings* xiii. 25. And Jehoash the son of Jehoahaz took again out of the hand of Benhadad the son of Hazael the cities, which he had taken out of the hand of Jehoahaz his father by war: three times did Joash beat him, and recovered the cities of Israel.

(6) *Amos* i. 3—5. Thus saith the Lord; For three transgressions of Damascus, and for four, I will not turn away the punishment thereof; because they have threshed Gilead with threshing instruments of iron: but I will send a fire into the house of Hazael, which shall devour the palaces of Benhadad. I will break also the bar of Damascus, and cut off the inhabitant from the plain of Aven, and him that holdeth the sceptre from the house of Eden: and the people of Syria shall go into captivity unto Kir.—*2 Kings* xvi. 5—9. Then Rezin king of Syria and Pekah son of Remaliah king of Israel came up to Jerusalem to war: and they besieged Ahaz, but could not overcome him. At that time Rezin king of Syria recovered Elath to Syria, and drove the Jews from Elath: and the Syrians came to Elath, and

it fell into the power of Aretas, king of Arabia.¹ Under the Greek emperors of Constantinople, Damascus was the most celebrated city of the East, remarkable for its wealth, luxury, magnificence, and its numerous Christian population. Very soon after the establishment of Mahometanism, it became the capital of the Mussulman world, and is famous for its share in the history of the Crusades, and the exploits of Saladin. It is now governed by a Pacha appointed by the Turks.²

Damascus has been more fortunate than most of the Eastern cities ; it never attained the magnificence of Nineveh, or Babylon, nor has it ever fallen so low : for though often captured, and several times demolished, it has always risen again to splendour and dignity, and has in all ages been celebrated as one of the most delightful situations in the world. The approach to Damascus is surpassingly beautiful ; the traveller passes through groves of cypress, olive, and walnut trees, and hears on all sides the murmur of rivulets, which are concealed from his sight. Gardens extend, it is said, for no less than twenty miles round, and are thickly set with fruit-trees of all kinds, kept fresh and verdant by the numerous streams. The plain in which the city stands is bounded on three sides by distant mountains ; those which rise above the city on the fourth side are very near, and, like all the rest, bare and rugged. About half a mile from the city, tradition points out the spot where Saul was miraculously arrested in his career of mistaken zeal, and arose from the earth the fearless Apostle of the Cross that he had despised and persecuted.³ This remarkable scene is on the

dwelt there unto this day. So Ahaz sent messengers to Tiglath-pileser king of Assyria, saying, I am thy servant and thy son : come up, and save me out of the hand of the king of Syria, and out of the hand of the king of Israel, which rise up against me. And Ahaz took the silver and gold that was found in the house of the Lord, and in the treasures of the king's house, and sent it for a present to the king of Assyria. And the king of Assyria hearkened unto him : for the king of Assyria went up against Damascus, and took it, and carried the people of it captive to Kir, and slew Rezin.

(1) *2 Cor.* xi. 32. In Damascus the governor under Aretas the king kept the city of the Damascenes with a garrison, desirous to apprehend me.

(2) *Isa.* xvii. 3. The fortress also shall cease from Ephraim, and the kingdom from Damascus, and the remnant of Syria : they shall be as the glory of the children of Israel, saith the Lord of hosts.

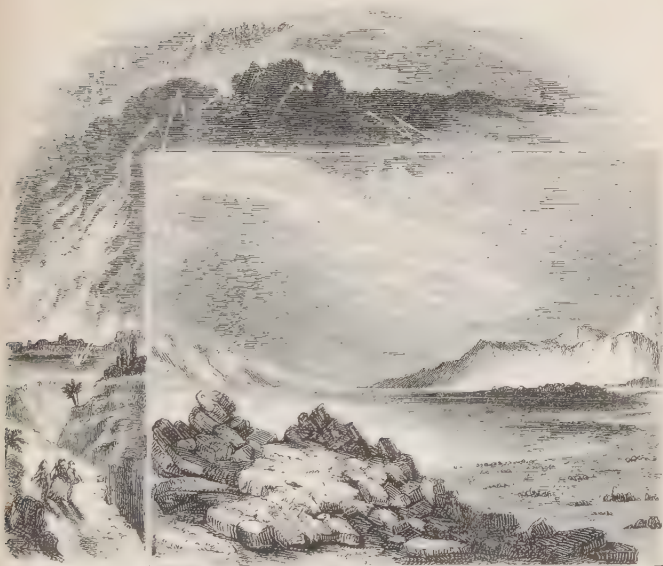
(3) *Acts* ix. 3—9. And as he journeyed, he came near Damascus : and suddenly there shined round about him a light from heaven : and he fell to the earth, and heard a voice saying unto him, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me ? And he said,

side of the old road, near the ruined arch of a bridge, and the tombs of some devout Christians. On entering the gate, the traveller passes through a long and broad street, still called Straight, which is said to be that in which Saul lodged when he was visited by Ananias. The interior of Damascus is not at all in character with the excessive beauty of nature without the walls. Very many of the streets have a mean appearance ; the houses are low ; and the most pleasing features of the interior are the rivers and groups of trees, the coffee-houses, and the luxurious houses of the rich. The chief building in the middle of the city, with a large dome and two roofs, is the grand mosque, formerly a Christian cathedral. The architecture of this building is very superior in beauty and variety to that of any other mosque in the Turkish dominions. So peculiarly sacred is it held by the Mahometans, that Christians are rarely allowed to enter it, though it was originally reared by members of that faith.

Who art thou, Lord ? And the Lord said, I am Jesus whom thou persecutest : it is hard for thee to kick against the pricks. And he trembling and astonished said, Lord, what wilt thou have me to do ? And the Lord said unto him, Arise, and go into the city, and it shall be told thee what thou must do. And the men which journeyed with him stood speechless, hearing a voice, but seeing no man. And Saul arose from the earth ; and when his eyes were opened, he saw no man : but they led him by the hand, and brought him into Damascus. And he was three days without sight, and neither did eat nor drink.



THE DEAD SEA.



THE Dead Sea is in the Holy Scriptures most commonly called the Salt Sea,¹ but sometimes the east,² or former³ Sea, and the Sea of the Plain.⁴ The site which it now occupies was anciently, in part if not wholly, a fertile and populous plain, watered by the river Jordan.⁵ But though the soil was

(1) *Gen.* xiv. 3. The vale of Siddim, which is the salt sea.— — *Deut.* iii. 17. The sea of the plain, even the salt sea.

(2) *Joel* ii. 20. With his face toward the east sea.

(3) *Zech.* xiv. 8. Half of them toward the former sea. (Obs.)—In scripture language, the words *former* and *before* denote the east; *latter* and *behind*, the west; *on the right-hand*, the south; and *on the left-hand*, the north; the spectator being supposed to face the rising sun.

(4) *Deut.* iv. 49. Even unto the sea of the plain.

(5) *Gen.* xiii. 10. Lot lifted up his eyes, and beheld all the plain of Jordan, that it was well watered every where.

rich on the surface, it was composed beneath¹ of the inflammable slime or bitumen still common in many parts of Asia, which was used as cement in building.² This fruitful land was turned into barrenness, for the wickedness of them that dwelt therein;³ the four cities of the plain, Sodom, Gomorrah, Admah, and Zeboim,⁴ being overthrown with their inhabitants and produce by burning brimstone from the Lord out of heaven.⁵ So complete was their destruction, that the fall of Sodom and Gomorrah is quoted by the prophets as a type of the irreparable ruin which God was about to bring on other guilty nations.⁶ It does not become us to inquire, to what extent the Almighty employed natural agencies to bring about this terrific overthrow; but as a question of Physical Geography, we may briefly notice the various opinions which have been held, as to the alteration produced in the features of the country, by the Divine visitation. The course of the Jordan having been the same before this awful event that it is now, some have supposed that its waters were discharged into a subterraneous lake, covered by a crust of bitumen and earth, and that this, at the time of the destruction of the plain, sunk to the bottom with the guilty cities. Others are of opinion, that the course of the Jordan anciently extended to the Red Sea, the high intervening land having been raised by a convulsion simultaneous with the overthrow of the cities. But it has been recently discovered, that the surface of the Salt Sea is 1300 feet below the level of the Red Sea, so that if the high land between the two were removed, the whole of the valley of the

(1) *Gen.* xiv. 10. And the vale of Siddim was full of slimepits.

(2) *Gen.* xi. 3. And they had brick for stone, and slime had they for mortar.

(3) *Ps.* cvii. 34. A fruitful land into barrenness, for the wickedness of them that dwell therein.

(4) *Deut.* xxix. 23. Like the overthrow of Sodom, and Gomorrah, Admah, and Zeboim, which the Lord overthrew in his anger, and in his wrath.

(5) *Gen.* xix. 24, 25. Then the Lord rained upon Sodom and upon Gomorrah brimstone and fire from the Lord out of heaven; and he overthrew those cities, and all the plain, and all the inhabitants of the cities, and that which grew upon the ground.

(6) *Isa.* xiii. 19. And Babylon, the glory of kingdoms, the beauty of the Chaldees' excellency, shall be as when God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah.—*Jer.* xlix. 18. As in the overthrow of Sodom and Gomorrah and the neighbour cities thereof, saith the Lord, no man shall abide there, neither shall a son of man dwell in it.

Jordan would be inundated by water from the Indian Ocean, as far north as the lake of Tiberias. The simplest explanation, and at the same time that which is most easily reconciled with the Scripture narrative is, that, from the earliest time, a lake of sweet and wholesome river water received the river Jordan ; but that after the cities were destroyed by fire from heaven, the waters of the lake (now become salt and unfit for use,) encroached on the fertile plain lying south of the lake on which the cities were situated, and rendered permanent the sterility which the visitation by fire had originated.

It is called by the Greeks and Romans, "The Asphaltic Lake," from the asphaltum or bitumen which was found scattered on its shores or floating on the surface of its waves. The name of Dead Sea it received, partly because no living creatures are found in it, and partly because the Jordan and other streams are swallowed up in its depths without again flowing forth as living streams. By the Arabs it is called the Sea of Lot, from the circumstance alluded to in Genesis xix. 26. The Dead Sea is about 45 miles long from north to south, and ten or eleven from east to west, and is embedded between cliffs from 1500 to 2500 feet high. Among these there is at the southwestern extremity a great mountain of salt, the base of which passes under the lake. The hard sandy soil near the shore is destitute of vegetation, and is encrusted with salt, which is collected by the Arabs, and forms an article of traffic. Its water, though clear, is so strongly impregnated with salt, that whatever is dipped in it is no sooner dry than it is found to be covered with a sparkling crust. Its weight when compared to pure water is as three to two, consequently it is very buoyant, and travellers who have bathed in it state that it is almost impossible to sink beneath it. It is not true that iron will float on its surface, or that birds flying across the lake are killed by the vapour which is exhaled : but no fish will live in its waters, nor will any useful plants grow on its shores. That such was also the case of old, the prophet appears to intimate, when he describes its future condition.¹ Besides

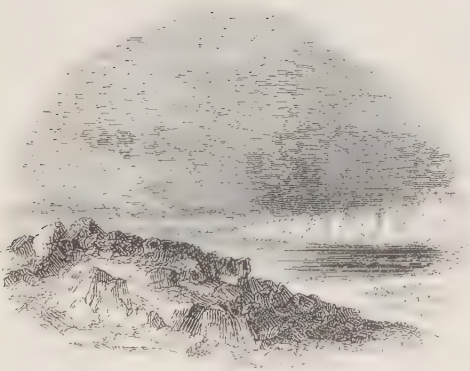
(1) *Ezek.* xlvii. 9, 12. It shall come to pass that every thing that liveth, which moveth, whithersoever the rivers shall come, shall live : and there shall be a very great multitude of fish, because these waters shall come thither : for they shall be

the bitumen mentioned above, pieces of sulphur and salt-petre are frequently found on the shore, and black shining stones, partially inflammable, are picked up, and made into rosaries and toys. The climate in the neighbourhood is unhealthy in summer; but not more so than might be expected from the situation of the lake. As the Dead Sea receives the waters of the Jordan and of several smaller streams, though no rivers flow from it, its superfluous water must be carried off by the copious evaporation which takes place during the summer months. Such is also the case with the waters of the Mediterranean, where the absorption amounts to 6914 tons daily, for every square mile.

In the spring of the year 1848, a survey of the Dead Sea was made by a party of American sailors, under the command of Captain Lynch. They entered the lake by the Jordan, and coasted it all round, returning to the point from whence they started. Captain Lynch states that the waters of the Dead Sea are without smell, but to the taste are bitter, salt, and disgusting. The boats immediately on their entrance were caught in a gale of wind, and so thick and heavy was the water, that the waves dashed against the sides of the boats like hammers. Birds and insects were found on the shores, and sometimes ducks on the sea; but no living creature was discovered in the sea, although the salt streams which flow into it contain fish. The greatest depth was found to be 188 fathoms, or 1128 feet; the northern part is the deepest, and here the bed was found to be nearly level. Near the shore the bottom is covered by a crust of salt, but in the central parts it consists of mud mixed with cubic crystals of the same substance. The southern part of the lake is so much shallower than the northern, that for a space of ten miles the depth does not exceed three fathoms or eighteen feet, the bed containing no crystals, but the southern shore being covered with a crust of salt. On passing the mountain of Sodom, the party ob-

healed; and every thing shall live whither the river cometh.—And by the river upon the bank thereof, on this side and on that side, shall grow all trees for meat, whose leaf shall not fade, neither shall the fruit thereof be consumed: it shall bring forth new fruit according to his months, because their waters they issued out of the sanctuary; and the fruit thereof shall be for meat, and the leaf thereof for medicine.

served a large column of solid rock-salt, covered with crystals of another mineral ; the appearance of this is described as being most astonishing. The western shores present evident marks of destruction, and Captain Lynch says that the result of the survey confirms, to the very letter, the scriptural account of the destruction of the cities of the Plain.



IDOLS OF EGYPT.



EGYPT is one of the first and most famous kingdoms that we read of in history. From the earliest ages of which we have any record, it was noted for its civilization, being governed by a king even in the time of Abraham, about 300 years after the Deluge. It does not appear that the Egyptians were at that time sunk in the gross idolatry by which they were afterwards corrupted; for Pharaoh, who with his house was plagued with great plagues by the Lord, because of Sarai, Abraham's wife, gave heed to the Divine warning, and did not commit the sin which he had ignorantly intended.¹ In

(1) *Gen.* xii. 17—20. And the Lord plagued Pharaoh and his house with great plagues because of Sarai Abram's wife. And Pharaoh called Abram, and said, What is this that thou hast done unto me? Why didst thou not tell me that she

Joseph's time it is probable that the religion of the Egyptians had lost much of its purity, that patriarch having married the daughter of the priest of On¹ ("the city of the Sun.") On this supposition, the first step towards idolatry was the worship of the heavenly bodies as emblems of God the Creator of all things. But that the Egyptians had not become utterly corrupt, appears from the fact, that Pharaoh attributed the wisdom of Joseph to the inspiration of the Almighty.² Not long after the death of Joseph, a revolution took place in Egypt, and an infidel king succeeded to the throne, who showed his hatred of Divine truth by persecuting the Lord's people.³ Under this oppression, the knowledge of God began to vanish even from among the Israelites, who, in compliance with the common custom, became idolaters.⁴ So strongly indeed were they imbued with the abominations of the Egyptians, that, in the wilderness, during the temporary absence of Moses, they made and worshipped a calf, the favourite idol of the country whence they had come, and devoted themselves to the worship of the

was thy wife? Why saidst thou, She is my sister? so I might have taken her to me to wife: now therefore behold thy wife, take her, and go thy way. And Pharaoh commanded his men concerning him: and they sent him away, and his wife, and all that he had.

(1) *Gen.* xli. 45. And Pharaoh called Joseph's name Zaphnath-paaneah; and he gave him to wife Asenath the daughter of Poti-pherah priest of On. And Joseph went out over all the land of Egypt.

(2) *Gen.* xli. 38, 39. And Pharaoh said unto his servants, Can we find such a one as this is, a man in whom the Spirit of God is? And Pharaoh said unto Joseph, Forasmuch as God nath shewed thee all this, there is none so discreet and wise as thou art.

(3) *Exod.* i. 8—14. Now there arose up a new king over Egypt, which knew not Joseph. And he said unto his people, Behold, the people of the children of Israel are more and mightier than we: come on, let us deal wisely with them; lest they multiply, and it come to pass, that, when there falleth out any war, they join also unto our enemies, and fight against us, and so get them up out of the land. Therefore they did set over them task-masters to afflict them with their burdens. And they built for Pharaoh treasure-cities, Pithom and Raamses. But the more they afflicted them, the more they multiplied and grew. And they were grieved because of the children of Israel. And the Egyptians made the children of Israel to serve with rigour: and they made their lives bitter with hard bondage, in mortar, and in brick, and in all manner of service in the field: all their service, wherein they made them serve, was with rigour.

(4) *Ezek.* xx. 8. But they rebelled against me, and would not hearken unto me: they did not every man cast away the abominations of their eyes, neither did they forsake the idols of Egypt: then I said, I will pour out my fury upon them, to accomplish my anger against them in the midst of the land of Egypt.

host of heaven.¹ So utterly absurd and senseless did the idolatry of Egypt eventually become, that even the Pagan historians, themselves idolaters, speak of it in terms of ridicule. The number of their idols was endless ; but those which seem to have been held in the highest estimation by them, in ancient times, were Osiris and Isis, thought by some to have been emblems of the sun and moon. These, however, were only the general gods of Egypt ; every district besides had its particular deity. Some worshipped dogs ; others, oxen ; some, hawks ; some, owls ; some, crocodiles ; some, cats ; and others a bird like a stork, called the Ibis. The worship of these animals was confined to certain places ; and it often happened that those who adored the crocodile were ridiculed by such as paid divine honours to the cat. To support the honour of their different idols, bloody wars often took place ; and the people of whole provinces were destroyed in deciding the question, whether a crocodile or a cat was a god ; yet they all agreed in this, that whoever killed an animal which was worshipped in any temple, should be immediately put to death. On this account, the Israelites could not sacrifice with safety, unless they first entirely withdrew from the land.² But of all the false gods worshipped by the Egyptians, Osiris, who was adored under the form of a bull called Apis, had the preference. The most magnificent temples were erected for him ; he was adored by all ranks of people while living, and when he died, all Egypt went into mourning for him. His body was buried with great ceremony, and at an expense estimated at no less than seven thousand pounds. Search was then made for a new god, which was distinguished by certain marks ; and when it was found, it was brought to Memphis with great rejoicing, and there placed upon a sumptuous throne. In addition to animals,

(1) *Acts* vii. 42. Then God turned, and gave them up to worship the host of heaven.

(2) *Exod.* v. 3. And they said, the God of the Hebrews hath met with us : let us go, we pray thee, three days' journey into the desert, and sacrifice unto the Lord our God ; lest he fall upon us with pestilence, or with the sword.—*Exod.* viii. 25, 26. And Pharaoh called for Moses and for Aaron, and said, Goye, sacrifice to your God in the land. And Moses said, It is not meet so to do ; for we shall sacrifice the abomination of the Egyptians to the Lord our God : lo, shall we sacrifice the abomination of the Egyptians before their eyes, and will they not stone us ?

vegetables also had divine honours paid to them, especially leeks and onions. The only approach to a reason, that we can discover, for this gross folly, is the benefit which men often derived from these objects, especially in Egypt. That country was less than any other in the world indebted to the labour of its inhabitants, who, finding the land cultivated for them by natural operations, and the fruits of the earth produced without tillage, forgot that all these things were directed by the providence of God, and ascribed the power of serving them to the sun and moon, and the river Nile, as first causes; hence they were easily led to pay divine honours to the animals which saved them from injury, and so to those which, though noxious, they fancied they might propitiate by their blind worship. Thus, having changed the glory of the incorruptible God into an image, God also gave them up to uncleanness, so that they worshipped and served the creature more than the Creator.¹

But this state of things was not destined to last; Isaiah foretold that the idols of Egypt should be moved:² Jeremiah, that they should be broken and burnt;³ Ezekiel, that they should be destroyed.⁴ And accordingly at the present day there is not a temple in Egypt against which these predictions have not been fulfilled, so that it is a matter of doubt to which of the false gods many of them were originally dedicated. The palace and temple of Rameses II. king of Egypt, indestructible as it must have appeared to its founder, was, among other

(1) *Rom.* i. 22—25. Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools, and changed the glory of the incorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man, and to birds, and four-footed beasts, and creeping things. Wherefore God also gave them up to uncleanness through the lusts of their own hearts, to dishonour their own bodies between themselves: who changed the truth of God into a lie, and worshipped and served the creature more than the Creator, who is blessed for ever. Amen.

(2) *Isa.* xix. 1. Behold, the Lord rideth upon a swift cloud, and shall come into Egypt: and the idols of Egypt shall be moved at his presence.

(3) *Jer.* xliii. 12, 13. And I will kindle a fire in the houses of the gods of Egypt; and he shall burn them, and carry them away captives: and he shall array himself with the land of Egypt, as a shepherd putteth on his garment; and he shall go forth from thence in peace. He shall break also the images of Beth-shemesh, that is in the land of Egypt; and the houses of the gods of the Egyptians shall be burnt with fire.

(4) *Ezek.* xxx. 13. Thus saith the Lord God; I will also destroy the idols, and I will cause their images to cease out of Noph; and there shall be no more a prince of the land of Egypt: and I will put a fear in the land of Egypt.

similar buildings, unable to withstand the mighty words of the Prophets, and is now in the condition figured in the cut. It stands on the left bank of the Nile, in ancient Thebes, and for elegance of sculpture may vie with any other monument of Egyptian art. It was famous in ancient history for the statue of the king in whose honour it was erected, who by the Greek and Roman writers was called Memnon. This statue was said to have the wonderful property of uttering a melodious sound every day, when it was first touched by the beams of the rising sun, and again at the setting of the sun. It was thrown down by Cambyzes the Persian, about 500 years B.C. It was originally in a sitting posture, the hands resting on the knees, but it is now in fragments; the features are no longer discernible; the throne and legs are broken to small pieces; while the upper part, broken at the waist, lies on the ground in the position in which it fell. Some parts of it have been taken away by the Arabs to make mill-stones. It was the largest statue in the world, weighing, it has been calculated, little short of a thousand tons. The broken figures, standing upright, with their backs resting against the pieces of the wall, are twenty-five feet in height. Rameses II. is supposed to have been the Sesostris of classical writers, and the Shishak who pillaged the temple in the reign of Rehoboam king of Judah.¹

(1) 1 *Kings* xiv. 25, 26. And it came to pass in the fifth year of king Rehoboam, that Shishak king of Egypt came up against Jerusalem: and he took away the treasures of the house of the Lord, and the treasures of the king's house.

EPHESUS.



THIS city, famous in Grecian history as the first of the twelve cities of Ionia, and in Roman history as the capital of Proconsular Asia, holds also a prominent place in the history of the early Christian Church. Owing to its favourable position, and the excellence of its docks, Ephesus, in its most prosperous days, engrossed the commerce of the whole of Western Asia. The inhabitants were idolaters, devoted to the worship of Diana, who is supposed to be the same with Ash-toreth, the goddess of the Sidonians. The temple which was erected here in her honour was so celebrated, that an obscure person named Eratostratus set fire to it, with the sole object of making himself notorious. It was afterwards rebuilt at the expense of the united cities of Asia Minor, and so far surpassed the first in splendour, that it was reckoned among the seven wonders of the world. It was built of cedar, cypress, white marble and gold ; and was ornamented with the works of the most celebrated sculptors and painters of the age. The fame

of the temple, of the goddess, and of the city itself, was spread not only through Asia, but the world ;¹ a celebrity which was diffused the more readily, because sacred games were held here, which were frequented by competitors and spectators from every country. The image of the goddess, according to the popular belief, had fallen down from heaven, and on this account it was considered to be so sacred, that even models of the shrine² and image were deemed worthy of divine honours. The inhabitants of Ephesus were particularly addicted to the practice of witchcraft, and used to travel through most parts of Asia, like the modern gipsies, deceiving all who were silly enough to believe them.³ St. Paul visited Ephesus several times, and on the second occasion resided there for more than two years, taking advantage of the great resort that was made to this city, to propagate the doctrines of the gospel. He here made many converts, who were distinguished by their piety and zeal, and testified their sincerity by publicly burning the books pertaining to their pretended magic arts.⁴ Towards the close of St. Paul's residence at Ephesus, a tumult was raised against him by Demetrius, a silversmith, and others of the same craft, who were afraid that if the new religion were disseminated throughout Asia, the sale of their silver shrines would fall off. The uproar, however, was quelled by the town-clerk, who cunningly persuaded the people, that the Apostle's denunciation of idols made with hands did not include the image which fell down from heaven. It was probably on the occasion of some similar tumult that the Apostle narrowly escaped with his life from exposure to wild beasts.⁵

On his departure into Macedonia, St. Paul left the increasing Church to the charge of Timothy, who hence became the first Bishop of Ephesus ; the tradition is, that the favourite disciple

(1) *Acts* xix. 27. Whom all Asia and the world worshippeth.

(2) *Acts* xix. 24. For a certain man named Demetrius, a silversmith, which made silver shrines for Diana, brought no small gain unto the craftsmen.

(3) *Acts* xix. 13. Then certain of the vagabond Jews, exorcists, took upon them to call over them which had evil spirits the name of the Lord Jesus, saying, We adjure you by Jesus whom Paul preacheth.

(4) *Acts* xix. 19. Many of them also which used curious arts brought their books together, and burned them before all men.

(5) *1 Cor.* xv. 32. If after the manner of men I have fought with beasts at Ephesus, what advantageth it me, if the dead rise not ?

of St. Paul retained this office till his death, and eventually suffered martyrdom and was buried here. Apollos, also, visited this city,¹ and, among the converts, Onesiphorus² is highly commended by St. Paul for his humanity towards himself, both at Ephesus and at Rome. Here, too, the Apostle St. John resided after his release from the island of Patmos, and wrote his Gospel not long before his death, which took place when he had attained a very advanced age. Mary, the mother of our Lord, is said by some to have resided with him, and also to have died and to have been buried at Ephesus. That the early Christians of Ephesus were distinguished for their purity of life and doctrine, may be inferred from the fact, that the Epistle of St. Paul to the Ephesians contains no blame nor complaint whatever; and that the Church retained that character for some time, is evident from the praise bestowed on its "works, labour, and patience" by St. John.³ But even before the Apostle's death it had become corrupt, and was threatened with a total deprivation of Christian light, unless it repented.⁴

Ephesus was partially despoiled by the Roman Emperor, Nero, and finally burnt by the Goths in the reign of Gallienus. Its present appearance is desolate in the extreme. The supposed ruins of Ephesus consist of shattered walls, and large masses of shapeless masonry. There are some broken marble columns and capitals of the Corinthian order; there are, also, ruins of a theatre, supposed to be the one in which St. Paul was preaching when interrupted by Demetrius. The remains of a splendid circus are tolerably entire; but no inscriptions nor ornaments are anywhere to be discovered. About a mile and a half from this scene of desolation is the site of another town, which was built from the ruins of Ephesus, but has long fallen to decay. It contains a few huts, and a mosque, which

(1) *Acts* xviii. 24. And a certain Jew named Apollos, born at Alexandria, an eloquent man, and mighty in the scriptures, came to Ephesus.

(2) *2 Tim.* i. 16. The Lord give mercy unto the house of Onesiphorus; for he oft refreshed me, and was not ashamed of my chain.

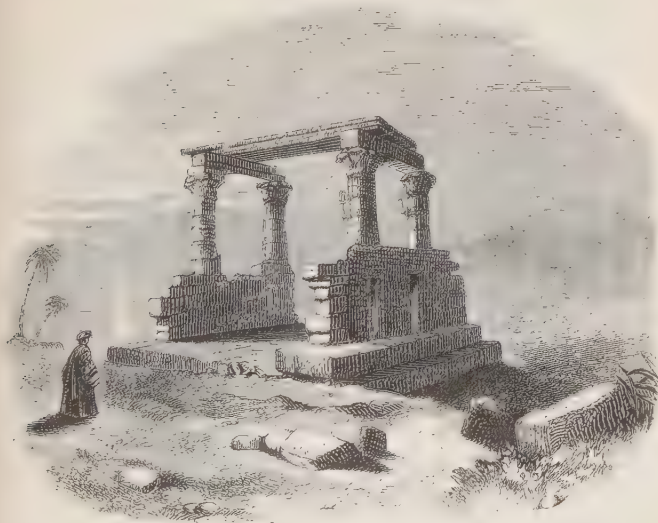
(3) *Rev.* ii. 2. I know thy works, and thy labour, and thy patience, and how thou canst not bear them which are evil.

(4) *Rev.* ii. 5. Remember therefore from whence thou art fallen, and repent, and do the first works; or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will remove thy candlestick out of his place, except thou repent.

is thought to be the site of the ancient church of St. John, which was fortified when the great General Council was held here, A.D. 431. The tomb of St. John was under his church, and not far off was the tomb of Timothy; that of the mother of our blessed Lord was in an adjoining hill. The candlestick of Ephesus is indeed removed; all that remains of its Gentile population is about a hundred Turks; and its numerous Christian congregation is reduced to two individuals, one a Greek gardener, and the other the keeper of a coffee-house. The present village is called Asalook, or "the City of the Moon," a name which is associated with the worship of the ancient city, the moon and Diana being, among heathen nations, different names for the same goddess.



TEMPLE OF ISIS, ETHIOPIA.



THE country which in the Hebrew language was called Cush, from the eldest son of Ham, is in our translation of the Bible rendered Ethiopia—"The land of men burnt in the face." This name, in its widest sense, included all the country lying south of Egypt, as well as the south of Arabia, to which latter country the Ethiopian woman belonged whom Moses married.¹ More frequently, however, it is to be understood as comprising the extensive tract of land now known as Nubia and Abyssinia, which bordered on Egypt, and was bounded on the east by the Red Sea, its limits on the south and west not being defined. Very little is known of the early history of the Ethiopians, who for the most part consisted of barbarous tribes.

(1) *Numb.* xii. 1. And Miriam and Aaron spake against Moses because of the Ethiopian woman whom he had married: for he had married an Ethiopian woman.

There did, however, exist a civilized Ethiopian people, who dwelt in cities, erected temples, and had a fixed government and laws. The country was much intersected by rivers, which were navigated by boats made of the Egyptian bulrush or papyrus,¹ which, according to Bruce, are in use at the present day. A piece of acacia wood serves as a keel, to which the rushes, first sewn together, are joined, and so form the sides.

The most important as well as the most highly civilized district of Ethiopia was Moroë, a large tract of land nearly enclosed by the Nile and another river, now called Atbara. Upon this island (as it was called) lay a city of the same name, the splendid ruins of which prove that its ancient inhabitants had made a considerable advance in architecture and the other arts of civilized life.

The government was in the hands of a race of priests, worshippers of Ammon, who elected from among themselves a king. The Ethiopians formed part of the force led up by Shishak against Rehoboam king of Judah,² and about thirty years afterwards, Zerah, another Ethiopian monarch, led a mighty army against Asa, who, relying on the Divine assistance, utterly defeated him.³ So, king of Egypt, to whom an embassy was sent by Hoshea, king of Israel,⁴ is supposed to have been king of Ethiopia as well. Tirhakah, the king of Ethiopia, who is mentioned as having meditated war against Sennacherib,⁵ was also king of Egypt. These facts sufficiently account for the frequent mention of Egypt and Ethiopia in close political connexion, as

(1) *Isa.* xviii. 2. That sendeth ambassadors by the sea, even in vessels of bulrushes upon the waters.

(2) *2 Chron.* xii. 3. And the people were without number that came with him out of Egypt; the Lubims, the Sukkiims, and the Ethiopians.

(3) *2 Chron.* xiv. 9—13. And there came out against them Zerah the Ethiopian with an host of a thousand thousand, and three hundred chariots; and came unto Mareshah. Then Asa went out against him, and they set the battle in array in the valley of Zephathah at Mareshah. And Asa cried unto the Lord his God, and said, Lord, it is nothing with thee to help, whether with many, or with them that have no power: help us, O Lord our God; for we rest on thee, and in thy name we go against this multitude. O Lord, thou art our God; let not man prevail against thee. So the Lord smote the Ethiopians before Asa, and before Judah; and the Ethiopians fled.

(4) *2 Kings* xvii. 4. For he had sent messengers to So king of Egypt.

(5) *2 Kings* xix. 9. And when he heard say of Tirhakah king of Ethiopia, Behold, he is come out to fight against thee: he sent messengers again unto Hezekiah.

well as for their being threatened with punishment from the same quarter. Isaiah foretold that the king of Assyria should lead away the Egyptians prisoners, and the Ethiopians captives;¹ Ezekiel describes the two countries as falling together under the power of the king of Babylon,² and to Daniel it was shown, that the Romans should extend their arms over Egypt, Lybia, and Ethiopia.³ The fulfilment of these prophecies is therefore to be discovered in the fate of Egypt; and it appears from history that, B.C. 526, Egypt, with as much of the neighbouring country as the conquerors thought worthy of being taken possession of, became a province of Babylon; B.C. 332, it fell into the hands of Alexander the Great; and at the time of our Blessed Lord it was in the power of the Romans. Another remarkable class of prophecies respecting Ethiopia contains allusions to the future enlightenment of the people. Thus Zephaniah foretold that suppliants from beyond the rivers of Ethiopia should bring offerings and call upon the name of the Lord;⁴ and a similar prophecy occurs in the Psalms.⁵ The Baptism of Queen Candace's treasurer, by Philip the deacon,⁶ led the way to the fulfilment of this prediction, there being in the country, even at the present time, a tradition that Christianity was introduced by this person. But however this may be, a church was founded in Ethiopia at a very early period, St. Athanasius having sent a Bishop thither in the fourth century. Abyssinia is to this day the only great Christian state in the eastern world; the inhabitants generally express a deep sense of religion, and are much given to visiting the sick, almsgiving, and other Christian virtues.

(1) *Isa.* xx. 4. So shall the king of Assyria lead away the Egyptians prisoners, and the Ethiopians captives.

(2) *Ezek.* xxx. 4, 24. And the sword shall come upon Egypt, and great pain shall be in Ethiopia. And I will strengthen the arms of the king of Babylon, and put my sword in his hand: but I will break Pharaoh's arms.

(3) *Dan.* xi. 43. But he shall have power over the treasures of gold and of silver, and over all the precious things of Egypt: and the Libyans and the Ethiopians shall be at his steps.

(4) *Zeph.* iii. 10. From beyond the rivers of Ethiopia my suppliants, even the daughter of my dispersed, shall bring mine offering.

(5) *Ps.* lxviii. 31. Princes shall come out of Egypt; Ethiopia shall soon stretch out her hands unto God.

(6) *Acts* viii. 27—38.

One of the most interesting remains of ancient art in this country is the ruined temple of the goddess Isis, situated on the western bank of the Nile, and surrounded by foundations of buildings, which must once have constituted a city of temples. The ruin, figured in the wood-cut, consists of six beautifully finished columns with richly-carved capitals. The two on the right, which form a gateway, are ornamented with the head of Isis, who is represented with the ears of a cow, the most sacred animal of Egypt and Ethiopia. The face is well preserved, and has the peculiar softness of expression which is so remarkable in Egyptian statues. The other columns have capitals of the lotus form, and are ornamented with grapes and ears of wheat. From these and other parts which remain, it appears that the temple measured thirty feet by thirty-six. Small as it was, great labour was bestowed on its erection and decoration ; and a vast number of Greek inscriptions, of a comparatively recent date, show that the temple was held in such high repute, as to be visited by worshippers who came from a great distance to secure, by offerings, the good-will of the goddess for themselves and their friends. Numerous other temples dedicated to the same goddess have been discovered, all in a greater or less state of decay. One visited by Mr. Belzoni, at no great distance from that described, was used as a cow-house.

G A Z A.



GAZA, the frontier town of Canaan, is one of the earliest cities of Palestine mentioned in the Holy Scriptures.¹ Little, however, is said of it in the earlier books, except that it was not subdued by Joshua;² hence we may infer that it was strongly fortified even at that remote period, having several towns and villages under its protection.³ In the partition of the land, it fell to the lot of Judah, who took possession of it and the surrounding country:⁴ but instead of exterminating

(1) *Gen.* x. 19. And the border of the Canaanites was from Sidon, as thou comest to Gerar, unto Gaza.

(2) *Josh.* xi. 22. There was none of the Anakims left in the land of the children of Israel: only in Gaza, in Gath, and in Ashdod, there remained.

(3) *Josh.* xv. 47. Gaza with her towns and her villages.

(4) *Judges* i. 18. Also Judah took Gaza with the coast thereof.

the inhabitants, as they had been commanded by the Lord,¹ they, in common with the other tribes, entered into alliances with the subdued people, connived at their idolatry,² and even worshipped their false gods.³ Gaza therefore, with other cities, was left to prove Israel, whether they would keep the way of the Lord to walk therein, or no;⁴ it subsequently recovered its independence, becoming one of the five lordships of the Palestines, and in the time of the judges, extending its jurisdiction over its late conquerors.⁵ After forty years of oppression,⁶ Samson was raised by God to be the champion and avenger of His people, and Gaza became renowned as the scene of his later deeds, and of his fall.⁷ But the power of the Philistines was not crushed by the mighty deeds of Samson; for shortly afterwards they defeated the Israelites in a pitched battle, slew 30,000 men, and carried off the ark of the covenant.⁸ On the solemn repentance of the Israelites, they were delivered by God out of the hand of the Philistines, retook all their cities, and were freed from their oppressors during the remainder of the life of Samuel.⁹

During the wicked reign of Saul, the Philistines again

(1) *Deut.* vii. 2. And when the Lord thy God shall deliver them before thee; thou shalt smite them, and utterly destroy them; thou shalt make no covenant with them, nor shew mercy unto them.

(2) *Judges* ii. 2. And ye shall make no league with the inhabitants of this land; ye shall throw down their altars: but ye have not obeyed my voice: why have ye done this?

(3) *Judges* ii. 12. And they forsook the Lord God of their fathers, which brought them out of the land of Egypt, and followed other gods, of the gods of the people that were round about them, and bowed themselves unto them, and provoked the Lord to anger.

(4) *Judges* ii. 21, 22. I also will not henceforth drive out any from before them of the nations which Joshua left when he died: that through them I may prove Israel, whether they will keep the way of the Lord to walk therein, as their fathers did keep it, or not.

(5) *Judges* xiv. 4. For at that time the Philistines had dominion over Israel.

(6) *Judges* xiii. 1. And the children of Israel did evil again in the sight of the Lord; and the Lord delivered them into the hand of the Philistines forty years.

(7) *Judges* xvi. 21—31.

(8) 1 *Sam.* iv. 10, 11. And the Philistines fought, and Israel was smitten, and they fled every man into his tent: and there was a very great slaughter; for there fell of Israel thirty thousand footmen. And the ark of God was taken.

(9) 1 *Sam.* vii. 13. So the Philistines were subdued, and they came no more into the coast of Israel: and the hand of the Lord was against the Philistines all the days of Samuel.

became formidable opponents of Israel, and, indeed, held them in such subjection as to forbid them the use of offensive weapons.¹ David's successes against the national enemy² restored the independence of Israel, until Solomon made Gaza (or Azzah)³ the south-western boundary of his kingdom. Under the succeeding kings, the Philistines again made head against their conquerors, but were subdued by Hezekiah, who smote them as far as Gaza.⁴ This city subsequently fell into the hands of the Egyptians,⁵ and a succession of reverses stripped it of its importance: Antiochus, king of Syria, (B.C. 198,) took it and gave it up to be plundered by his soldiers; Jonathan Maccabæus destroyed its suburbs;⁶ Simon, his brother, (B.C. 143,) took it and expelled the inhabitants;⁷ and Alexander Jannæus, after devoting a year to the siege, gained possession of it, slew most of the inhabitants, and left it in utter ruin. It was afterwards rebuilt, and is mentioned in the New Testament; but nothing remarkable is stated respecting it.

The prophecies uttered against Gaza are similar in import to those pronounced on the rest of the Philistines, violent destruction of the town itself,⁸ loss of all political power,⁹ and solitariness.¹⁰ These denunciations have been fulfilled again and again. Even since the Christian era, it has gone through another course of decay. About A.D. 285, a Christian Church

(1) 1 *Sam.* xiii. 19. Now there was no smith found throughout all the land of Israel: for the Philistines said, Lest the Hebrews make them swords or spears.

(2) 1 *Sam.* xvii.—2 *Sam.* v. 25. And David did so, as the Lord had commanded him; and smote the Philistines from Geba until thou come to Gazer.—2 *Sam.* viii. 1. And after this it came to pass, that David smote the Philistines, and subdued them: and David took Metheg-ammah out of the hand of the Philistines.

(3) *Jer.* xxv. 20. The land of the Philistines, and Ashkelon, and Azzah.

(4) 2 *Kings* xviii. 8. He smote the Philistines, even unto Gaza, and the borders thereof, from the tower of the watchmen to the fenced city.

(5) *Jer.* xlvii. 1. The word of the Lord that came to Jeremiah the prophet against the Philistines, before that Pharaoh smote Gaza.

(6) 1 *Macc.* xi. 61. From whence he went to Gaza, but they of Gaza shut him out; wherefore he laid siege unto it, and burned the suburbs thereof with fire, and spoiled them.

(7) 1 *Macc.* xiii. 43, 47.

(8) *Jer.* xlvii. 5. Baldness is come upon Gaza.

(9) *Zech.* ix. 5. Gaza also shall see it, and be very sorrowful.

(10) *Zeph.* ii. 4. For Gaza shall be forsaken.

was in existence here, at which time its Bishop, Silvanus, suffered martyrdom ; the majority of its inhabitants being still idolators. About 150 years afterwards, eight temples devoted to the worship of heathen gods were demolished, and a large church erected ; it was then an important town, which it continued to be for many years, and its inhabitants are described as noble, liberal, and friendly to strangers. It fell early under the power of the Mahometans, and suffered so many reverses, that the Crusaders found it deserted, and its ruins spread over the hill and the adjacent plain. It afterwards made a fresh struggle to regain its place among inhabited cities, but was never restored to importance. Ancient Gaza stood on a low round hill of considerable extent, and was surrounded by strong walls ; but all vestiges of these and of the ancient strength of Gaza have disappeared, and nothing remains to mark its former extent, except the bounds of the hill on which it stood. Even the traces of its former existence are very few, consisting of occasional columns of marble or grey granite, scattered in the streets and gardens, or used as thresholds of the gates and doors of houses. The modern town has been built principally on the plain below, only the southern part of the hill being covered with houses. Most of these last are of stone, especially such as belong to the government. The houses on the plain are numerous, and wholly built of mud or unburnt brick. The present population is about fifteen thousand, and the inhabitants are praised for their cleanliness and personal neatness, qualities which are rare in modern Palestine.

JERICO.



JERICO (the odorous), surnamed "The City of Palm-trees,"¹ was situated in a plain of the same name, about six miles from the river Jordan, where it enters the Dead Sea. It was a place of some note before the invasion of Canaan by the Israelites, and on this account, as well as from its being the first city that lay in the way of Joshua and his army, the successor of Moses took the precaution of sending spies to examine its defences before he marched into the country.² The miraculous passage of the Jordan, in the manner promised by Joshua,³ had the effect of completely convincing the people that

(1) *Dent.* xxxiv. 3. The plain of the valley of Jericho, the city of palm-trees.

(2) *Josh.* ii. 1. And Joshua the son of Nun sent out of Shittim two men to spy secretly, saying, Go view the land, even Jericho.

(3) *Josh.* iii. 13—17. And it shall come to pass, as soon as the soles of the feet of the priests that bear the ark of the Lord, the Lord of all the earth, shall

the Lord was with him as He had been with Moses. Instead, therefore, of relying on human means for capturing the city, they faithfully obeyed the extraordinary directions of their leader, and, after they had marched thirteen times in procession round the city, according to his instructions, the walls were supernaturally levelled, and thus allowed free access to the conquerors.¹ The success of this proceeding, which would have been idle in a people who hoped to conquer by the strength of their own arm, occurring as it did at the outset of their campaigns, could not fail to convince the Israelites that the Lord of Hosts would fight for them, and cast out all their enemies from before them, if they trusted in Him and kept His commandments. The city being captured, its idolatrous inhabitants were put to the sword, with the exception of Rahab and her father's household, she having testified her faith in the one true God² by her kind reception of the spies. To deepen the faith of his followers, and more fully to convince them of the curse which attached to idolatry, Joshua denounced a severe domestic calamity on him, whosoever he should be, who should restore the guilty city.³ Soon after the Israelites had taken possession of their new abode, a settlement was effected in some part of the plain of Jericho,⁴ probably nothing

rest in the waters of Jordan, that the waters of Jordan shall be cut off from the waters that come down from above; and they shall stand upon an heap. And it came to pass when the people removed from their tents, to pass over Jordan, and the priests bearing the ark of the covenant before the people; and as they that bare the ark were come unto Jordan, and the feet of the priests that bare the ark were dipped in the brim of the water, (for Jordan overfloweth all his banks all the time of harvest) that the waters which came down from above stood and rose up upon an heap very far from the city Adam, that is beside Zaretan—and those that came down toward the sea of the plain, even the salt-sea, failed, and were cut off: and the people passed over right against Jericho. And the priests that bare the ark of the covenant of the Lord stood firm on dry ground in the midst of Jordan, and all the Israelites passed over on dry ground, until all the people were passed clean over Jordan.

(1) *Josh.* vi.

(2) *Heb.* xi. 31. By faith the harlot Rahab perished not with them that believed not, when she had received the spies with peace.

(3) *Josh.* vi. 26. And Joshua adjured them at that time, saying, Cursed be the man before the Lord, that riseth up and buildeth this city Jericho: he shall lay the foundation thereof in his first-born, and in his youngest son shall he set up the gates of it.

(4) *Judges* iii. 13. And he gathered unto him the children of Ammon and Amalek, and went and smote Israel, and possessed the city of palm-trees.

more than an encampment of shepherds, for whose occupation the country was well adapted ; and this is incidentally mentioned as an obscure and little known place in the time of David ;¹ but in the reign of the arrogant and idolatrous monarch Ahab, Hiel, in defiance of the ancient prediction, rebuilt Jericho as a city, and the prophecy was literally fulfilled by the death of his eldest and youngest sons.²

The curse, however, did not extend to the inhabitants of the city ; for Jericho soon became noted as the seat of the schools of the prophets,³ and, next to Jerusalem, as the principal city in the whole country. In our Saviour's time, too, it was a city of importance. Herod the Great expended large sums of money in beautifying it, constructed a palace, an amphitheatre, and a race-course ; he also frequently resided in it during the latter years of his life, and at last died there. Later writers assign to it at this time a circuit of four miles, and assert that it alone contained twelve thousand priests, who lived here in order to be near Jerusalem, and who frequently traversed the road between the two cities. Jericho was the scene of several of our blessed Lord's miracles,⁴ and the residence of Zaccheus.⁵ The wild mountainous district between

(1) 2 *Sam.* x. 5. And the king said, Tarry at Jericho until your beards be grown, and then return.

(2) 1 *Kings* xvi. 34. In his days did Hiel the Beth-elite build Jericho : he laid the foundation thereof in Abiram his first-born, and set up the gates thereof in his youngest son Segub, according to the word of the Lord, which he spake by Joshua the son of Nun.

(3) 2 *Kings* ii. 4, 5. And Elijah said unto him, Elisha, Tarry here, I pray thee ; for the Lord hath sent me to Jericho. And he said, As the Lord liveth, and as thy soul liveth, I will not leave thee. So they came to Jericho. And the sons of the prophets that were at Jericho came to Elisha, and said unto him, Knowest thou that the Lord will take away thy master from thy head to-day ? And he answered, Yea, I know it ; hold ye your peace.

(4) *Luke* xviii. 35, 42, 43. And it came to pass, that as he was come nigh unto Jericho, a certain blind man sat by the way-side begging. . . . And Jesus said unto him, Receive thy sight ; thy faith hath saved thee. And immediately he received his sight, and followed him.—*Matt.* xx. 29, 30, 34. And as they departed from Jericho, a great multitude followed him. And, behold, two blind men sitting by the way-side, when they heard that Jesus passed by, cried out, saying, Have mercy on us, O Lord, thou son of David. . . . So Jesus had compassion on them, and touched their eyes : and immediately their eyes received sight, and they followed him.

(5) *Luke* xix. 1—7. And Jesus entered and passed through Jericho. And behold, there was a man named Zaccheus, which was the chief among the publicans,

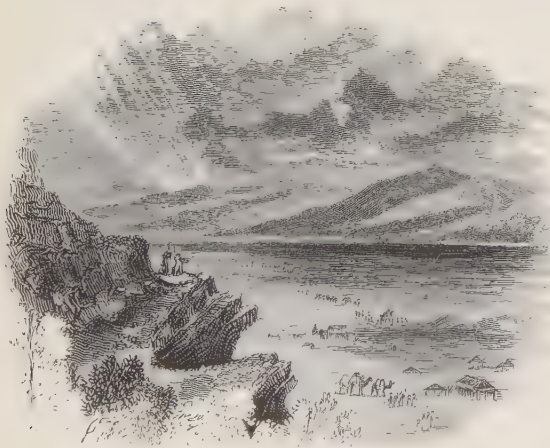
Jericho and Jerusalem, called Quarantania, from being the supposed scene of our Lord's *forty* days' fast, is described by travellers as a most fearful desert, and highly dangerous from being the common resort of robbers and murderers. This was also the case in the time of Christ, as is shown by the parable of the good Samaritan.¹ The road through it was considered the most insecure in all Palestine, and was hence called the Bloody Way: in later times the Romans built a castle here for the protection of travellers, and even at the present day all parties of travellers are accompanied by strong guards.

Jericho long continued a place of importance, and was the see of a Christian bishop; it was probably overthrown during the Mahometan conquest. So utterly was it destroyed that its very site is disputed. Tradition fixes it at Rieha, (the odorous,) a poor hamlet consisting of a few houses, and the ruins of a tower thirty or forty feet square and of about the same height, which pilgrims regard as the house of Zaccheus. It contains about two hundred inhabitants, who are indolent and dishonest, nominally gaining their livelihood by tillage and keeping cattle, but principally maintaining themselves by plunder. Other travellers are of opinion that the true site of Jericho is to be sought nearer the mountains, two miles west of Rieha, in a spot where there are extensive ruins on both sides of the road from Jerusalem. There is nothing imposing in these remains, which appear to have been carefully searched through, in order that the more valuable materials might be employed in the erection of new buildings. The position of this spot, and its distance from Jerusalem and the Jordan, well accord with the description given by ancient historians. The palm-wood of Jericho, which was seven miles long, and gave to

and he was rich. And he sought to see Jesus who he was; and could not for the press, because he was little of stature. And he ran before, and climbed up into a sycamore-tree to see him: for he was to pass that way. And when Jesus came to the place, he looked up, and saw him, and said unto him, Zaccheus, make haste, and come down; for to-day I must abide at thy house. And he made haste, and came down, and received him joyfully.

(1) *Luke* x. 30. And Jesus answering said, A certain man went down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and fell among thieves, which stripped him of his raiment, and wounded him, and departed, leaving him half dead.

this city its name of the City of Palm-trees, has disappeared ; scarcely more than a dozen of these trees are now to be seen in the plain, but specimens still remain in the neighbourhood of the Mediterranean coast. A solitary tree of this species, (the date-palm,) near the ruined castle at Rieha, is still pointed out to credulous pilgrims as the sycamore-tree into which Zaccheus climbed in order that he might see our Saviour.



JERUSALEM.



JERUSALEM, the capital of Judea and all Palestine, was in the remotest antiquity called Salem,¹ and is supposed to be the Salem of which Melchisedek was king.² It afterwards bore the name of Jebus, when its king Adonizedec was taken prisoner and slain by Joshua.³ At a later period, the lower part of the city was taken from the Jebusites by the tribes of Judah and Benjamin, on whose borders it lay ; but the upper part remained in the possession of its original inhabitants, so that Israelites and Jebusites dwelt in the same city.⁴ For

(1) *Ps.* lxxvi. 2. In Salem also is his tabernacle, and his dwelling-place in Zion.

(2) *Gen.* xiv. 18. And Melchisedek king of Salem brought forth bread and wine : and he was the priest of the most high God.

(3) *Josh.* x.

(4) *Judges* i. 21. And the children of Benjamin did not drive out the Jebusites that inhabited Jerusalem ; but the Jebusites dwell with the children of Benjamin in Jerusalem unto this day.

seven years and a half David reigned over the tribe of Judah alone at Hebron ;¹ but when he was called to rule over all Israel, he led his forces against the higher part of the city or "stronghold of Zion," took it, and calling it "the City of David," fixed his residence there.² Jerusalem now became the centre of all civil and religious affairs, in accordance with the divinely appointed institution of Moses.³ On the revolt of the ten tribes under Jeroboam, it ceased to be the metropolis of Israel, but was still the royal city of Judah and Benjamin. The history of Jerusalem is so closely interwoven with that of the Jews, that an enumeration of the prophecies connected with it, would include most of the denunciations uttered by the prophets on their disobedient and rebellious countrymen. It will be enough, then, to state generally, that from the time of Moses downwards, no single prophet failed to denounce on the people, whom God had chosen for his own, the severest penalties on pride, disobedience, and irreligion, or to attach the choicest blessings to the opposite of these : but all in vain : "They turned back and dealt unfaithfully, provoking Him to anger with their graven images and idolatrous rites," till at length the day of retribution began to dawn. In the reign of Rehoboam, Shishak, king of Egypt, came against Jerusalem, conquered it, and despoiled the Temple and king's palace of the most valuable effects ;⁴ the same calamity befel it 150 years afterwards, during the war with Jehoash king of

(1) 2 *Sam.* ii. 1, 11. And it came to pass after this, that David inquired of the Lord, saying, Shall I go up into any of the cities of Judah ? And the Lord said unto him, Go up. And David said, Whither shall I go up ? And he said, Unto Hebron. . . . And the time that David was king in Hebron over the house of Judah was seven years and six months.

(2) 2 *Sam.* v. 6, 7. And the king and his men went to Jerusalem unto the Jebusites, the inhabitants of the land : which spake unto David, saying, Except thou take away the blind and the lame, thou shalt not come in hither : thinking, David cannot come in hither. Nevertheless David took the stronghold of Zion : the same is the city of David.

(3) *Deut.* xii. 5, 6. But unto the place which the Lord your God shall choose out of all your tribes to put his name there, even unto his habitation shall ye seek, and thither thou shalt come : and thither ye shall bring your burnt offerings, and your sacrifices, and your tithes, and heave offerings of your hand, and your vows, and your freewill offerings, and the firstlings of your herds and of your flocks.

(4) 1 *Kings* xiv. 25, 26. And it came to pass in the fifth year of king Rehoboam, that Shishak king of Egypt came up against Jerusalem : and he took away

Israel.¹ In the reigns of Manasseh² and the three last kings of Judah, it met with a similar fate; and finally, when the measure of its iniquity was full, it was taken by Nebuchadnezzar, who razed its wall, and destroyed its Temple and palaces with fire.³

During the captivity, the kingdom of Babylon was transferred to the Persians, and at the expiration of seventy years, according to the prophecy of Jeremiah,⁴ Cyrus, king of Persia, (whose very name had been foretold by Isaiah⁵) issued a decree for the restoration of Jerusalem and the rebuilding of the city and Temple, which was carried into effect by Zerubbabel, (or Shesh-bazzar,) Ezra and Nehemiah, the zeal of the workmen being encouraged by the promise that the new Temple should be visited by the Prince of Peace.⁶ But Jerusalem was far from enjoying uninterrupted prosperity. During the long series of wars between Egypt and Syria, of which Palestine was the theatre, this city was a frequent sufferer. Antiochus Epiphanes, not content with plundering the city and razing its walls, abolished the worship of Jehovah and substituted that of an idol which he set up in the Temple. This led to the heroic revolt of the Maccabees, and eventually to the restoration of the city and the re-establishment of the true religion. About the year 63 B.C. Jerusalem was captured by the Romans under the treasures of the house of the Lord, and the treasures of the king's house; he even took away all—and he took away all the shields of gold which Solomon had made.

(1) 2 *Kings* xiv. 13, 14. And Jehoash king of Israel took Amaziah king of Judah, the son of Jehoash the son of Ahaziah, at Beth-shemesh, and came to Jerusalem, and brake down the wall of Jerusalem from the gate of Ephraim unto the corner gate, four hundred cubits. And he took all the gold and silver, and all the vessels that were found in the house of the Lord, and in the treasures of the king's house, and hostages, and returned to Samaria.

(2) 2 *Chron.* xxxiii.

(3) 2 *Kings* xxiv. xxv.

(4) *Jer.* xxv. 11. And this whole land shall be a desolation, and an astonishment; and these nations shall serve the king of Babylon seventy years.

(5) *Isa.* xlv. 28. That saith of Cyrus, He is my shepherd, and shall perform all my pleasure.

(6) *Hag.* ii. 7—9. And I will shake all nations, and the desire of all nations shall come: and I will fill this house with glory, saith the Lord of hosts. The silver is mine, and the gold is mine, saith the Lord of hosts. The glory of this latter house shall be greater than of the former, saith the Lord of hosts: and in this place will I give peace, saith the Lord of hosts.

Pompey, who destroyed the walls of the city, but did not interfere with the religion of the inhabitants. Twenty years after, Antipater restored the fortifications ; and his son Herod the Great rebuilt and beautified the greater part of the city, and left it in that state of magnificence in which it stood at the period of our Saviour's ministry. It was by our blessed Lord himself that the most terrific prophecies of the coming fate of Jerusalem were pronounced,¹ in consequence of the Jews' rejection of Him as the Messiah, and most terribly were they fulfilled. Judea having revolted from the Romans, Titus (A.D. 70) came against Jerusalem with a large army, and the city, after having been the scene of horrors without example, was taken by storm, the walls and Temple were razed to the ground, and only a small portion of the fortifications left, to show how strong a place the Romans had conquered. The number of prisoners taken amounted to ninety-seven thousand ; but those who perished during the siege and storming are calculated at a million. Thus did Jerusalem "drink the dregs of the cup of trembling and wring them out."² Forty-eight years afterwards the city was rebuilt by the Emperor Adrian ; the old name was supplanted by that of *Ælia*, and no Jew was allowed to enter it. In the reign of Constantine, the first Christian Emperor, the old name was restored, and the Jews were permitted to enter once a year to weep over the desolation of "the holy and beautiful house." In 614 it was taken by the Persians, when the churches were burnt, and 90,000 Christians massacred. Soon after this it fell into the power of the Mahometans, who persecuted Jews and Christians alike. The efforts of the Crusaders to recover Jerusalem and the Holy Land prevailed but for a while ; and soon after the Christians were expelled for the last time, it lost much of its importance. From that time to the present (with the excep-

(1) *Matt.* xxiii. 37, 38. O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not ! Behold, your house is left unto you desolate.—*Luke* xxi. 24. And they shall fall by the edge of the sword, and shall be led away captive into all nations : and Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles.

(2) *Isa.* li. 17.

tion of the interval between 1832 and 1841, during which it was subject to the Pacha of Egypt) Jerusalem has been in the hands of the Turks. The stringent laws against Christians are now, however, so much relaxed, that Jerusalem is allowed to be the See of a Bishop ; a church has been built on Mount Zion, and there is hope that Jerusalem shall again be called "a city of truth, the mountain of the Lord of hosts, the holy mountain."¹

(1) *Zech.* viii. 3.



THE JORDAN.



THE plain of Jordan is mentioned very early in the Bible, having been selected by Lot, on account of its fertility, when he parted from Abraham.¹ The Israelites, from their very first settlement in Canaan, always held the Jordan in great veneration, not only because it was the only large river in the country, but because the first miracle wrought by God to assure them of His assistance in conquering the Canaanites, was the stoppage of its waters, in fulfilment of Joshua's prophecy uttered a short time before.² It was properly the

(1) *Gen.* xiii. 10, 11. And Lot lifted up his eyes, and beheld all the plain of Jordan, that it was well watered every where, before the Lord destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah, even as the garden of the Lord, like the land of Egypt, as thou comest unto Zoar. Then Lot chose him all the plain of Jordan; and Lot journeyed east: and they separated themselves the one from the other.

(2) *Josh.* iii. 13—16. It shall come to pass, as soon as the soles of the feet of the priests that bear the ark of the Lord, the Lord of all the earth,

boundary of the country of Israel ; but the tribes of Reuben and Gad, and the half tribe of Manasseh, were, at their own request, allowed to settle on the eastern side in a district well adapted for feeding cattle.¹ The Jordan is also of note in connexion with several incidents in the lives of the prophets Elijah and Elisha. At the brook Cherith, which falls into the Jordan, Elijah was fed by ravens in time of famine ;² his last miracle was the parting of the waters of the same river by his mantle, and a like miracle, wrought by Elisha with the same instrument, convinced the sons of the prophets that the spirit of Elijah rested on him also.³ Naaman, general of the Syrian army, was healed of his leprosy by dipping seven times in the river Jordan, and was glad to confess the means appointed by God better even than the venerated rivers of

shall rest in the waters of Jordan, that the waters of Jordan shall be cut off from the waters that come down from above ; and they shall stand upon an heap. And it came to pass, when the people removed from their tents, to pass over Jordan, and the priests bearing the ark of the covenant before the people ; and as they that bare the ark were come unto Jordan, and the feet of the priests that bare the ark were dipped in the brim of the water, (for Jordan overfloweth all his banks all the time of harvest,) that the waters which came down from above stood and rose up upon an heap very far from the city Adam, that is beside Zaretan : and those that came down toward the sea of the plain, even the salt sea, failed, and were cut off : and the people passed over right against Jericho.

(1) *Numb.* xxxii. 1—5, 33. Now the children of Reuben and the children of Gad had a very great multitude of cattle : and when they saw the land of Jazer, and the land of Gilead, that, behold, the place was a place for cattle ; the children of Gad and the children of Reuben came and spake unto Moses, and to Eleazar the priest, and unto the princes of the congregation, saying . . . the country, which the Lord smote before the congregation of Israel, is a land for cattle, and thy servants have cattle : wherefore, said they, if we have found grace in thy sight, let this land be given unto thy servants for a possession, and bring us not over Jordan. . . . And Moses gave unto them, even to the children of Gad, and to the children of Reuben, and unto half the tribe of Manasseh the son of Joseph, the kingdom of Sihon king of the Amorites, and the kingdom of Og king of Bashan, the land, with the cities thereof in the coasts, even the cities of the country round about.

(2) *1 Kings* xvii. 2—5. And the word of the Lord came unto him, saying, Get thee hence, and turn thee eastward, and hide thyself by the brook Cherith, that is before Jordan. And it shall be, that thou shalt drink of the brook ; and I have commanded the ravens to feed thee there. So he went and did according unto the word of the Lord : for he went and dwelt by the brook Cherith, that is before Jordan.

(3) *2 Kings* ii. 7, 8, 13, 14. They two stood by Jordan. And Elijah took his mantle, and wrapped it together, and smote the waters, and they were divided hither and thither, so that they two went over on dry ground. . . . He took up also the

Damascus.¹ On all these accounts the Jordan was sacred in the eyes of the Jews as their national river, and among Christians it is invested with no less interest as being the scene of our Blessed Lord's example of obedience and humility in coming to the Baptism of John.

The word Jordan signifies "the flower down," a name which is most appropriate, from its being the only river in Palestine which flows all the year round. It has two sources among the mountains of Lebanon, of which the eastern, deriving its origin from the melting snows of Anti-Lebanon, is called by the same name from its very first rise, though the other stream is considerably longer. These two uniting, fall into the little lake called the waters of Merom,² now Bahr-el-Huloh. This lake varies in length from three to eight miles, according to the season; on its sides there grow in great abundance the reeds which are used in the East for writing with; its waters are muddy, but well supplied with fish, and the country around is much frequented by wild beasts. After passing through this lake, the Jordan flows down through a narrow rocky channel with considerable rapidity and noise, to the Lake of Tiberias. In this part of its course, the stream is almost hid by shady trees, which grow on each side and make the prospect most delightful, bounded as it is both on the east and west by a chain of mountains. As the river approaches the Lake of Tiberias it widens, and passes through it, with a current perceptible during a great part of its course. Flowing on still towards the south, it traverses a valley which is bounded on the east by mountains which rise almost precipitously from the bed of the river; on the west, there is a fine fertile plain between the river and another chain of mountains. This valley is the lowest ground in the whole of Syria, many hundreds of feet below the level of the Medi-

mantle of Elijah that fell from him, and went back, and stood by the bank of Jordan; and he took the mantle of Elijah that fell from him, and smote the waters, and said, Where is the Lord God of Elijah? and when he also had smitten the waters, they parted hither and thither: and Elisha went over.

(1) *2 Kings* v.

(2) *Josh.* xi. 5. And when all these kings were met together, they came and pitched together at the waters of Merom, to fight against Israel.

terranean ; and as it is sheltered by high land on both sides, the consequence is an unusual degree of heat, which, combined with the moisture of the river, produces a fertility and luxuriance of vegetation almost unequalled elsewhere. This beautiful plain is five or six miles across in the northern half, but widens greatly as it approaches the Dead Sea. The river itself flows in a valley about three quarters of a mile broad, which is considerably lower than the great vale ; and this lower valley is covered with high trees, and a luxuriant verdure, affording a striking contrast to the sandy slopes which border it on both sides. In the winter, the swollen river overflows the plain in the bottom of this lower valley, but never rises to the level of the upper plain, which is at least forty feet above the level of the river. The wild animals which harbour during summer amid the shade and freshness of the lower valley are then obliged to ascend to the upper plain, and seek some other refuge for the winter. The river had overflowed its banks in this way, when Joshua and the Israelites reached it as they were about to take possession of the Promised Land. This event took place four days before the Passover, and at the time of barley-harvest, which in Palestine begins in April, two or three weeks before wheat-harvest. This swelling of the river, and retreat of the wild animals before it, are also alluded to by the prophet Jeremiah.¹ When the river is at the lowest, its banks are about fourteen or fifteen feet high ; its width varies with the season of the year from thirty to a hundred yards ; and when swollen by the winter rains it is a deep and rapid stream. After completing a course of about a hundred miles, of which sixty-five are between the Lake of Tiberias and the Dead Sea, it falls into the latter, and has no outlet, the evaporation in this hot climate being sufficiently great to carry off from the surface of the lake as much water as is brought in by the stream. The precise spot where the Israelites crossed the Jordan, as well as that at which our Blessed Lord was baptized, are unknown. Two places are pointed out, one about four miles from the

(1) *Jer. xlix.* 19. Behold, he shall come up like a lion from the swelling of Jordan.

Dead Sea, another about seven ; both are annually resorted to by caravans of pilgrims, amounting to several thousands, who believe that by bathing in the sacred stream they will be cleansed from their sins. These persons are professedly Christians, but the rites which they perform on this occasion are so unseemly as to excite the ridicule of even the Turks and Arabs. As the word Bethabara means "house of passage," it is supposed that it was here that the Israelites miraculously crossed the river, and that the place received its name in commemoration of that event.



LAODICEA.



LAODICEA is the last of the seven Churches of Asia, mentioned in the Revelation of St. John. There were anciently two cities of this name in Asia Minor ; but the one which is situated on the river Lycus, on the confines of Phrygia and Lydia, about 400 miles east of Ephesus, was the only Laodicea mentioned in holy Scripture. It was anciently called Diospolis, "the city of Jupiter," but received the name of Laodicea from Laodike, the wife of Antiochus II. who rebuilt it and made it the capital of Greater Phrygia. It was a commercial town of some importance, partly inhabited by Jews, but principally enriched by its own citizens and the munificence of the Roman emperors. The richness of its soil, and the abundance of wool produced by its numerous sheep, also tended to add to its celebrity. It is also remarkable as having

been the birth-place of several men of note. A Christian Church existed at Laodicea at an early period, but by whom it was founded is uncertain ; though in all probability it was frequently visited by St. Paul during his two years' residence at Ephesus.¹ At all events, the great Apostle of the Gentiles took great interest in its welfare, as he mentions it more than once :² a letter even is in existence which is said to have been written by St. Paul to the Laodiceans, but it has never been looked upon as genuine. The Christians of Laodicea, if they ever embraced the faith in truth and sincerity, appear to have soon fallen away—lukewarmness and spiritual pride having, at an early period, brought on them the most terrible denunciations pronounced on any of the Churches of Asia.³ Laodicea, in common with the neighbouring cities, was frequently shattered by earthquakes, but was rebuilt by Marcus Aurelius. The hand of man, however, was more effectually employed in its destruction than natural convulsions : for in the year 1009 it fell into the power of the Turks, and from that time it was subjected to various assaults, during which the inhabitants were massacred, and the Christian bishops carried away into captivity. In 1120 it was taken from the Turks by the Eastern emperor, John Comnenus, and its walls rebuilt ; but forty years afterwards it was retaken by the Turks, and many of its inhabitants, including the Bishop, were massacred. The frequency of earthquakes to which this district has always been

(1) *Acts* xiv. 10. And this continued by the space of two years ; so that all they which dwelt in Asia heard the word of the Lord Jesus, both Jews and Greeks.

(2) *Col.* ii. 1. For I would that ye knew what great conflict I have for you, and for them at Laodicea.—*Col.* iv. 13, 16. For I bear him record, that he hath a great zeal for you, and them that are in Laodicea.... And when this epistle is read among you, cause that it be read also in the church of the Laodiceans ; and that ye likewise read the Epistle from Laodicea.

(3) *Rev.* iii. 14—18. And unto the angel of the church of the Laodiceans write ; These things saith the Amen, the faithful and true witness, the beginning of the creation of God ; I know thy works, that thou art neither cold nor hot : I would thou wert cold or hot. So then because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of my mouth. Because thou sayest, I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing ; and knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked : I counsel thee to buy of me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich ; and white raiment, that thou mayest be clothed.

liable, gradually demolished great part of the city, and the inhabitants being diminished in number, found themselves unequal to the task of rebuilding it, and finally abandoned the spot altogether.

The remains of the city are situated on a long hilly range, running from south-east to north-west, between the two small rivers, which immediately afterwards fall into the Lycus. In 1671 it had no inhabitants but wolves, foxes, and jackals. There now stand among the fragments of bygone greatness a few huts containing some fifty inhabitants, whose meanness and poverty serve only to increase the appearance of desolation. There still remains a subterraneous aqueduct, constructed to bring the waters of the hills to the town, as also a stadium or race-course, the northern part of which is almost entire. The ruins of four theatres attest its magnificence under the Romans; and the crumbling ruins of a very large church testify that the early Christians spared no expense in erecting buildings intended for the worship of God. Laodicea is now called by the Turks, Eski-hissar, or the old castle. The ruins of the more ancient city of Hierapolis¹ are about six miles to the south, near the termination of the same ridge. The surrounding country is composed entirely of a mineral substance, which has been deposited from a hot spring. So strongly impregnated with lime is the water from this spring, that, wherever it flows, it shortly forms for itself a hollow channel of stone with high borders: whatever is placed in it soon becomes encrusted with the same substance, even the herbage on its edges is coated in like manner. All the old walls and aqueducts are built of stone similarly formed. There are numerous remains of splendid ancient structures, intermixed with those of buildings clumsily constructed out of old materials, which last are attributed to the Turks. Here there was once a spacious warm bath, with extensive courts and halls, ornamented with pillars and other decorations of white marble. The line of the streets is yet visible, and there are traces of arches and columnar walls in several places. High above all these, on the side of the mountain, is the theatre, which is in a more perfect condition

(1) *Col.* iv. 13. 'Them that are in Laodicea, and them in Hierapolis.

than almost any other in Asia Minor ; and at the base of the mountain, among stone vaults, some of which still contain the ashes of the dead, stand the remains of the nave of a large church, distinguished by crosses over the gates. Here, probably, Epaphras, the fellow-servant¹ and fellow-prisoner² of St. Paul, testified the great zeal³ which he had, that his Christian brethren might stand perfect and complete in all the will of God. Here, too, St. Philip the Apostle is said to have preached the gospel of his Divine Master, and, carried away with indignation at the superstitious idolatry of the heathen inhabitants, was seized in a popular tumult, imprisoned, scourged, and finally hanged by the neck to a pillar. Not like these holy men were the Laodicean converts ; neither enemies to Christ, nor true friends ; serving God and gain, Christ and the world, by turns, as the occasion served ; rich in the good things of this world, but wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked as regarded things eternal—their sad end should be a salutary warning to all lukewarm Christians.

(1) *Col. i. 7.* As ye also learned of Epaphras our dear fellow-servant, who is for you a faithful minister of Christ.

(2) *Philemon 23.* There salute thee Epaphras, my fellow-prisoner in Christ Jesus, &c.

(3) *Col. iv. 12.* Epaphras, who is one of you, a servant of Christ saluteth you always labouring fervently for you in prayers.



LEBANON.



MOUNT HOR,¹ the northern boundary of the land of Israel, (which is evidently distinct from the mountain of the same name on which Aaron died,)² is on good grounds supposed to have been a branch of Mount Lebanon. Lebanon itself, or "The White Mountain" (so called from its limestone rocks, and from having its summit perpetually covered with snow), is the largest and most important range of hills in Syria, beginning at the Mediterranean, and running, for about seventy miles, in two parallel chains from south-east to north-west.

(1) *Numb.* xxxiv. 7, 8. This shall be your north border: from the great sea ye shall point out for you mount Hor: from mount Hor ye shall point out your border unto the entrance of Hamath.

(2) *Numb.* xxxiii. 38. And Aaron the priest went up into mount Hor at the commandment of the Lord, and died there, in the fortieth year after the children of Israel were come out of the land of Egypt, in the first day of the fifth month.

The more southerly of these chains, called Anti-Libanus (opposite to Lebanon), was within the confines of Israel, but Lebanon itself belonged to the Phœnicians. Between them is a well-watered and fertile valley, anciently called Cœle-Syria (Hollow Syria). Lebanon is frequently mentioned in the prophetic Scriptures, but rather for the sake of supplying poetic imagery, than as the subject of direct prophecy. Thus it is made an emblem of strength,¹ abundance,² majesty,³ glory,⁴ durability,⁵ and grace.⁶ But Lebanon was celebrated most of all for its majestic cedar-trees, which were made a type of regal state,⁷ and so of the political prosperity of Israel. When, therefore, we read in the prophetic Scriptures, that Lebanon shall be ashamed⁸ and fall,⁹ we are to understand not merely a local denunciation, but a threatened loss to the whole kingdom of those attributes which Lebanon, with its mighty cedar forests, typified. Cedars are not peculiar to this mountain, for they grow also in Taurus and Amconus, in Asia Minor; but they nowhere attain the same height and vigour as on Lebanon. They were much more abundant anciently than at present, the extreme value of the timber as a building material having been the cause of its being greatly sought after for that purpose. The timber is hard and free from knots, and lasts so long that it is thought by some to be

(1) *Ps.* xxix. 6. He maketh them also to skip like a calf; Lebanon and Sirion like a young unicorn.

(2) *Ps.* lxxii. 16. The fruit thereof shall shake like Lebanon.

(3) *Cant.* v. 15. His countenance is as Lebanon, excellent as the cedars.

(4) *Isa.* xxxv. 2. It shall blossom abundantly, and rejoice even with joy and singing: the glory of Lebanon shall be given unto it, the excellency of Carmel and Sharon, they shall see the glory of the Lord, and the excellency of our God.

(5) *Hos.* xiv. 5. I will be as the dew unto Israel: he shall grow as the lily, and cast forth his roots as Lebanon.

(6) *Hos.* xiv. 6. His branches shall spread, and his beauty shall be as the olive tree, and his smell as Lebanon.

(7) *2 Kings* xiv. 9. And Jehoash the king of Israel sent to Amaziah king of Judah, saying, The thistle that was in Lebanon sent to the cedar that was in Lebanon, saying, Give thy daughter to my son to wife: and there passed by a wild beast that was in Lebanon, and trode down the thistle.

(8) *Isa.* xxxiii. 9. The earth mourneth and languisheth: Lebanon is ashamed and hewn down: Sharon is like a wilderness; and Bashan and Carmel shake off their fruits.

(9) *Isa.* x. 34. And he shall cut down the thickets of the forest with iron, and Lebanon shall fall by a mighty one.

not subject to decay. It was used in great quantities in the building of the Temple,¹ and of Solomon's palace,² at Jerusalem; and by the Tyrians the masts of ships were made of cedar. It may here be remarked, that the sweet-scented cedar, of which pencils are made, is the produce of another tree, a native of Bermuda; the wood of the cedar of Lebanon has been ascertained to be fragrant also, but only for about twelve months after felling. The beauty of the cedar while growing consists in the strength and elegant symmetry of its wide-spreading branches. The resin that exudes from the branches resembles in odour the balm of Mecca. Indeed every part of the tree has a strong balsamic smell, and the whole forest is in consequence so fragrant,³ that a walk through it is delightful. Cedars are still found growing abundantly on the northern parts of Lebanon, but the most famous are situated at the foot of a precipitous declivity, near the summit of the mountain, where there is a group which has excited the admiration of all travellers. This wood contains nearly a hundred large trees, and about three hundred smaller ones. About a century ago, there were among these fifteen trees, the patriarchs of the grove, formed each by the union of three or four trunks, and remarkable for their enormous size; this number is now reduced to seven. Tradition asserts, and the natives believe, that these aged trees are the remains of the forest that furnished timber for Solomon's temple three thousand years ago: and every year, on Transfiguration day, the Christians residing in the neighbourhood celebrate a mass here, at the foot of a cedar, upon a homely altar of stone. It is certain that they were very ancient several hundred years ago, and their appearance is so massive and imperishable, that it is easy to believe they existed in the prosperous days of Israel. On one of them are carved the names of many travellers of note who have visited the spot, and among the latest occurs that of Lamartine. They

(1) 1 *Kings* vi. 15. And he built the walls of the house within with boards of cedar, both the floor of the house, and the walls of the ceiling.

(2) 1 *Kings* vii. 2. He built also the house of the forest of Lebanon.

(3) *Ios.* xiv. 6. His branches shall spread, and his beauty shall be as the olive tree, and his smell as Lebanon.

are difficult of approach, and are surrounded by deep snow,¹ which is not passable until the middle of summer, when it begins to melt away; the ground on which they stand is uneven, and strewn to the depth of several inches with fallen leaves and fragments of cones; their position, on the brow of the mountain, surrounded on every side by deep and solemn valleys, has something sacred and awful in it: they seem as if placed in their grand and perilous site, like sentinels between time and eternity—memorials of the bright days when the first temple stood in all its splendour, and² types of the glory which shall be given to the church when the excellency of our God shall be revealed in the fulness of its majesty.

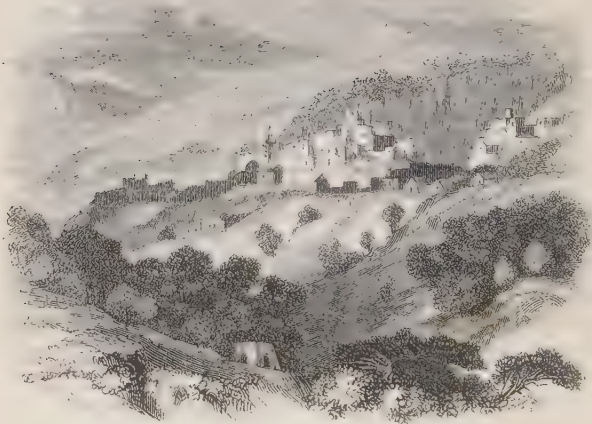
The middle and lower regions of Lebanon are magnificent and lovely. Beneath the rocky eminence of the cedar forest lies a valley said to be one of the fairest spots on the earth; it is copiously watered with springs and cascades, and abounds in pines, cypresses, oaks, and plantains. King Solomon, in order that he might enjoy this delightful scene, here built a pleasure house³ of which some modern travellers fancy they have discovered the remains.

(1) *Jer.* xviii. 14. Will a man leave the snow of Lebanon which cometh from the rock of the field?

(2) *Isa.* xxxv. 1, 2. The wilderness and the solitary place shall be glad for them; and the desert shall rejoice, and blossom as the rose. It shall blossom abundantly, and rejoice even with joy and singing: the glory of Lebanon shall be given unto it, the excellency of Carmel and Sharon, they shall see the glory of the Lord, and the excellency of our God.

(3) 1 *Kings* ix. 17, 19. And Solomon built Gezer . . . and that which Solomon desired to build in Jerusalem, and in Lebanon, and in all the land of his dominion.

NAZARETH.



NAZARETH was a town in Galilee, of so little political importance that it is not once mentioned in the Old Testament. By Christians, however, it will ever be regarded with the deepest interest, for here it was announced by the angel Gabriel,¹ that

(1) *Luke i. 26—33.* And in the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent from God unto a city of Galilee, named Nazareth, to a virgin espoused to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David ; and the virgin's name was Mary. And the angel came in unto her, and said, Hail, thou that art highly favoured, the Lord is with thee : blessed art thou among women. And when she saw him, she was troubled at his saying, and cast in her mind what manner of salutation this should be. And the angel said unto her, Fear not, Mary : for thou hast found favour with God. And, behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shalt call his name Jesus. He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest : and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David : and he shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever ; and of his kingdom there shall be no end.

the time had now arrived when a virgin should conceive and bear a son, Immanuel, God with us, the Saviour of the world.¹ Here, too, our Blessed Redeemer, after His return from Egypt, was subject to His parents, and spent thirty years, following the handicraft of his father,² and preparing Himself, by a life of peaceful self-denial, for the great object of His taking upon Him the human nature, and fulfilling, by His bearing the name of a Nazarene, the prophecy that he should be "despised and rejected of men."³ After his Baptism, He returned to Nazareth, and verified, by actual suffering, the prophecy, which had been already fulfilled by the name which He derived from His place of residence, that His report should not be believed, and that all men would hide their faces from Him :⁴ "He came to Nazareth, where He had been brought up : and, as His custom was, He went into the synagogue on the Sabbath day, and stood up for to read . . . And all they in the synagogue, when they heard these things, were filled with wrath, and rose up, and thrust Him out of the city, and led Him unto the brow of the hill whereon their city was built, that they might cast Him down headlong."⁵

Despised as the Galileans were by the inhabitants of Jerusalem, our Blessed Lord selected from among them, as his disciples, men who shrank from the perverse schism of the Samaritans and the formal observances of the Pharisees, "the Twelve" being all Galileans.

The vale of Nazareth is a kind of hollow, formed by a number of mountains of no great elevation, which rise around

(1) *Isa.* vii. 14. Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel.

(2) *Mark* vi. 3. Is not this the carpenter, the son of Mary ?

(3) *Isa.* liii. 3. He is despised and rejected of men ; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief : and we hid as it were our faces from him ; he was despised, and we esteemed him not.—*Matt.* ii. 23. And he came and dwelt in a city called Nazareth : that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophets, He shall be called a Nazarene.—*John* i. 46. And Nathanael said unto him, Can there any good thing come out of Nazareth ?

(4) *Isa.* liii. 1—3. Who hath believed our report ? and to whom is the arm of the Lord revealed ? For he shall grow up before him as a tender plant, and as a root out of a dry ground : he hath no form nor comeliness : and when we shall see him, there is no beauty that we should desire him. He is despised and rejected of men ; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief : and we hid as it were our faces from him ; he was despised, and we esteemed him not.

(5) *Luke* iv. 16, 28, 29.

it as if to guard it from intrusion. The town itself is situated on the side and extends nearly to the foot of a hill, which, though not very high, is rather steep and overhanging. Below it is a beautiful plain nearly a mile in length, and varying from two to four hundred yards in breadth. Then follows a ravine which gradually grows deeper and narrower, and terminates in an immense chasm with steep rocks on either side, which command a view of the noble plain of Esdraelon. The situation of Nazareth is very romantic: the scenery around is of the kind in which, one would imagine, the Saviour of the world delighted to wander, and to withdraw Himself when meditating on His great mission—deep and secluded dells covered with a wild verdure—silent and solemn paths, where overhanging rocks shut out all intrusion. The view from the hill above Nazareth is described as exceedingly beautiful. The plain of Esdraelon is a magnificent object; on the left is seen the round hill of Tabor, over the intervening hills, with portions of little Hermon and Gilboa, and the opposite mountains of Samaria: then comes the long line of Carmel, stretching away to the glittering waters of the Mediterranean: on the north is spread out another of the beautiful plains of Northern Palestine: beyond, long ridges rise, one higher than another, until the mountains of Safed overtop them all: further, towards the right, is a sea of mountains and hills, backed by the higher ones beyond the lake of Tiberias, and, in the north-east, by the majestic Hermon, with its ivy crown.

Northern Palestine having been peopled by Assyrian colonists after the captivity of the ten tribes,¹ would naturally be held in suspicion by the Jews, who, after their return from the Babylonish captivity, never again fell into the sin of idolatry; but Nazareth appears to have been held in peculiar disrepute; and it has been suggested that its very position may account for its evil name. It was a frontier town in three directions: towards Samaria, on the south, a region

(1) 2 *Kings* xvii. 24. And the king of Assyria brought men from Babylon, and from Cuthah, and from Ava, and from Hamath, and from Sepharvaim, and placed them in the cities of Samaria instead of the children of Israel: and they possessed Samaria, and dwelt in the cities thereof.

notorious for professed schismatical worship ; toward the land of the Philistines, on the south-west ; and on the west toward Acre, a city peopled by heathens, who, we are told, were left in the land, to prove the Israelites, whether they would hearken unto the commandments of the Lord or not.¹ Thus Nazareth, surrounded as it was by people of notoriously bad character, might easily be ensnared into heathenish alliances ; and malefactors from any of these neighbouring places would naturally resort to Nazareth as a place of security. Thus it is far from improbable that it might have, not unjustly, become noted for the number of evil-disposed persons who resided in it ; so that the question might well be asked, “ Can there any good thing come out of Nazareth ? ”

Nazareth is a well-built town, containing about three thousand inhabitants, of whom two-thirds are Christians. The houses are flat-roofed and built of stone, and mostly two stories high. The neighbourhood is planted with fig-trees, olive-trees, and vines, and the crops of corn are scarcely equalled throughout the length and breadth of Palestine. In the south-west part of the town is a small church, under a precipice of the hill, which here breaks off in a perpendicular wall, forty or fifty feet in height. This was probably the place to which our Saviour was led, that he might be cast down headlong by the offended Jews. Another spot is indeed pointed out by the monks of Nazareth, as the scene of this act of violence, but it is situated two miles from the town, a distance which is entirely at variance with the sacred narrative.

(1) *Judges* iii. 4. And they were to prove Israel by them, to know whether they would hearken unto the commandments of the Lord, which he commanded their fathers by the hand of Moses.

NINEVEH.



NINEVEH “the Great,” the residence of Ninus, as the name means, and one of the most ancient of cities, was the capital of the Assyrian empire. It was built by Asshur, the son of Nimrod,¹ on the eastern bank of the river Tigris. Its early history is not noticed either by sacred or profane writers ; in the time of Jonah, however, B.C. 860, it is described as being “an exceeding great city, of three days’ journey ;” and ancient geographers say that it was as large as Babylon, or even larger. It is also stated in the book of Jonah that it contained 120,000 persons who knew not their right hand from their left, a proverbial expression for very young children. Hence it has been

(1) *Gen.* x. 11. Out of that land went forth Asshur (or, the Assyrian), and builded Nineveh.

calculated that the population amounted to two millions. This number appears small in proportion to the vast extent of ground occupied ; but it must be recollected that the cities of the East enclosed many gardens and large spaces of vacant ground, a mode of building common also in the present day. The walls of Nineveh were a hundred feet high, and so broad that three wagons might be driven on them abreast. Upon the wall stood fifteen hundred towers, each two hundred feet in height ; and the whole was so strong as to be deemed impregnable. The position of Nineveh, close to a great navigable river, tended to promote not only its security, but its commercial prosperity ;¹ it was therefore the principal resort of the merchants² who traded between the East and West, and its inhabitants were highly civilized, but idolaters and of corrupt morals. On this account the prophet Jonah was commanded to cry against it : “for their wickedness was come up before God.”³ At the preaching of the man of God, they repented, but soon fell away again, for we find, in the books of Nahum⁴ and Zephaniah,⁵ the anger of God denounced on it for its falsehood, robbery, and pride. The former prophet foretold that it should be besieged and destroyed by fire, and its inhabitants cut off by the sword until it was empty, and

(1) *Nahum* iii. 8. Art thou better than populous No, that was situate among the rivers, that had the waters round about it, whose rampart was the sea, and her wall was from the sea?—*Ezek.* xxxi. 3—7. Behold, the Assyrian was a cedar in Lebanon with fair branches, and with a shadowing shroud, and of an high stature ; and his top was among the thick boughs. The waters made him great, the deep set him up on high with her rivers running round about his plants, and sent out her little rivers unto all the trees of the field. Therefore his height was exalted above all the trees of the field, and his boughs were multiplied, and his branches became long because of the multitude of waters, when he shot forth. All the fowls of heaven made their nests in his boughs, and under his branches did all the beasts of the field bring forth their young, and under his shadow dwelt all great nations. Thus was he fair in his greatness, in the length of his branches : for his root was by great waters.

(2) *Nahum* iii. 16. Thou hast multiplied thy merchants above the stars of heaven.

(3) *Jonah* i. 2.

(4) *Nahum* iii. 1. Woe to the bloody city ! it is all full of lies and robbery ; the prey departeth not.

(5) *Zeph.* ii. 15. This is the rejoicing city that dwelt carelessly, that said in her heart, I am, and there is none beside me : how is she become a desolation, a place for beasts to lie down in ! every one that passeth by her shall hiss, and wag his hand.

void, and waste.¹ Zephaniah describes it as destined to become a desolation, and a dwelling-place for wild animals.² Ezekiel too alludes to it under the image of a cedar of Lebanon, at one time so fair, that "not any tree in the garden of God was like unto it in its beauty;" at another, cut off, its branches fallen, its boughs broken, and its shadow deserted.³

In the reign of Hezekiah, Sennacherib, king of Assyria, led a vast army into Judæa, with the intention of reducing Jerusalem, but was obliged to return with shame, a hundred and eighty-five thousand men having been killed in a single night by the angel of the Lord.⁴ This loss he never recovered: several of his provinces revolted, and he was assassinated by his own sons. Under his successor, Nineveh rapidly declined, and was finally destroyed by the united forces of the kings of Babylon and Media, about 606 B.C.

The ruins of Nineveh are situated near the modern town of Mosul, but on the opposite bank of the Tigris. No ancient structure of any size is now standing, but numerous masses of ruined masonry, long mounds and ditches scattered over a

(1) *Nahum* ii. 10. She is empty, and void, and waste: and the heart melteth, and the knees smite together, and much pain is in all loins, and the faces of them all gather blackness.—*Nahum* iii. 15. There shall the fire devour thee; the sword shall cut thee off, it shall eat thee up like the canker-worm.

(2) *Zeph.* ii. 13, 14. And he will stretch out his hand against the north, and destroy Assyria; and will make Nineveh a desolation, and dry like a wilderness. And flocks shall lie down in the midst of her, all the beasts of the nations: both the cormorant and the bittern shall lodge in the upper lintels of it; their voice shall sing in the windows; desolation shall be in the thresholds: for he shall uncover the cedar-work.

(3) *Ezek.* xxxi. 8—12. The cedars in the garden of God could not hide him: the fir trees were not like his boughs, and the chesnut trees were not like his branches: nor any tree in the garden of God was like unto him in his beauty. I have made him fair by the multitude of his branches: so that all the trees of Eden, that were in the garden of God, envied him. Therefore thus saith the Lord God; Because thou hast lifted up thyself in height, and he hath shot up his top among the thick boughs, and his heart is lifted up in his height; I have therefore delivered him into the hand of the mighty one of the heathen; he shall surely deal with him: I have driven him out for his wickedness. And strangers, the terrible of the nations, have cut him off, and have left him: upon the mountains and in all the valleys his branches are fallen, and his boughs are broken by all the rivers of the land; and all the people of the earth are gone down from his shadow, and have left him.

(4) *Isa.* xxxvii. 36. Then the angel of the Lord went forth, and smote in the camp of the Assyrians a hundred and fourscore and five thousand: and when they arose early in the morning, behold, they were all dead corpses.

wide surface, point out where once stood "Nineveh, that great city." On one of the mounds has been built a mean village of about three hundred houses, the foundations of which are laid among broken bricks, hewn stones, and fragments of ancient sculpture, some of which still bear inscriptions.

In the village stands a mosque, which is said to cover the tomb of Jonah, and is the largest building in the place. There was formerly a Christian monastery in this spot, the Mahometan building having been erected over the church, which is preserved entire: but no Christian is allowed to enter it. The Christians named their church "the church of Jonah," from the tradition that the prophet preached in that place, but they deny that he was buried there. On the contrary, they maintain that after his mission he returned to Palestine, where he died, and was buried.

The tradition which places the tomb of Jonah on this spot has long been considered sufficient to identify the ruins described above with the site of ancient Nineveh. But it appears, from the extraordinary discoveries made by Mr. Layard, in 1845, that this opinion is only partially correct. Ancient Nineveh was in form a double square, two of its opposite sides measuring about twenty miles each, and the other two about ten: so that the whole circuit was sixty miles; and it might therefore be called with reason "an exceeding great city, of three days' journey."¹ But the ruins opposite Mosul are scarcely five miles in circumference, and consequently can form only a small portion of the ancient Assyrian capital. About twenty miles lower down the Tigris, and on the eastern side of the river, is another assemblage of mounds, called Nimroud, similar in character to those opposite Mosul. These, owing to their greater distance from any large city, have not been disturbed for centuries; but Mr. Layard, conjecturing that they probably contained ruins, undertook to excavate them, and finally, after having surmounted difficulties which would have utterly daunted a less resolute man, brought to light the remains of a splendid palace, or rather series of palaces, decorated with painted alabaster sculptures,

(1) *Jonah* iii. 3.

representing kings and nobles engaged in war and hunting, religious processions, figures of idols, some of Egyptian origin, others illustrating the peculiar forms of Assyrian worship denounced by the prophets,¹ but all belonging to so remote antiquity that he could not doubt the fact, that "before these wonderful forms, Ezekiel, Jonah, and others of the prophets stood, and Sennacherib bowed; that even the patriarch Abraham himself may possibly have looked upon them."

These structures, Mr. Layard, for satisfactory reasons, believes to be more ancient than those opposite Mosul; and he is inclined to the opinion either that Nimroud is identical with part of the most ancient city of Nineveh, and that the mound on which the tomb of Jonah stands, covers the remains of a palace subsequently erected; or, that both these remains were comprised within the limits of the Assyrian capital, the opposite angles being represented by two similar mounds, (which also contain ruined palaces,) situated at such a distance from the river as would make the limits of the city agree exactly with the description of the old geographers. The fact that, in this country, dwelling-houses were anciently, as now, constructed of unbaked bricks, sufficiently accounts for the disappearance of all remains of houses in the intervening space; that material being of so perishable a nature that constant repairs are required to prevent such structures from crumbling into dust.

Thus, after having been buried twenty-five centuries, her own records and even her place having been lost, "Nineveh the great" has, as it were, risen from the dead, to verify the records of the family of a humble but faithful man—the "Syrian ready to perish"—who, in the days of Nineveh's prosperity, became an exile, and turned from her dumb idols, to receive, in exchange, the oracles of God.

(1) *Ezek.* xxiii. 14, 15. She saw men pourtrayed upon the wall, the images of the Chaldeans pourtrayed with vermilion, girded with girdles upon their loins, exceeding in dyed attire upon their heads, all of them princes to look to, after the manner of the Babylonians of Chaldea, the land of their nativity.

PERGAMOS.



PERGAMOS, or Pergamus, now called Bergamo, anciently the capital of a kingdom of the same name, stands on the north bank of the river Caicus in Mysia, and is distant about 20 miles from the sea. About two centuries and a half before the Christian era, it was noted for its wealth, and was the seat of literature and arts. Its king, Eumenes II., paid great attention to the formation of a library, which became so extensive that Ptolemy, king of Egypt, jealous of its fame, forbade the exportation of papyrus, which gave rise to the invention of parchment, hence called *pergamena*. The library was afterwards removed to Egypt by Antony. The last king of Pergamos, Attalus II., bequeathed his wealth to the Romans, who also took possession of his kingdom. Here formerly stood a splendid temple, in which Æsculapius, the god of physic, was worshipped under the form of a serpent. Hence Satan is said to have had his

seat here.¹ The early Church of Pergamos was disgraced by the sect called the Nicolaitanes, who were infamous for their professed and open immorality. Antipas here suffered martyrdom for the Christian faith,² but his history is unknown.

Pergamos under the Romans having held superiority over all the cities of Asia, was enriched by them with the most costly and splendid works of art, and still preserves many vestiges of its ancient magnificence. The site of the theatre is admirably chosen; it embraces in its view the city and the plain of Pergamos with its chain of mountains, and is lit by the rising sun. There is in the middle of the city a ruin of such extent that it can have been nothing less than the palace of a Roman emperor. The river has five bridges, one of splendid masonry, so wide that it forms a tunnel a furlong in length, upon which a portion of this great palace stands. The walls of the Turkish houses are full of relics of marble, with ornaments of the richest Grecian art. All the works standing are magnificent; the amphitheatre especially, on the south-west of the citadel, is a wonderful building. A river runs through it, and the arches, now underground, are of the most exquisite workmanship. It was so constructed that it might be filled with water and made the scene of naval battles; when dry it was used for foot, horse, and chariot races. Triumphal arches shelter the mean huts of the modern Turks, and even the burial grounds are full of fine relics which have been collected to ornament the graves. The citadel is fortified by an outwork of wall, of considerable extent; and above it is a platform intended as a battery, built entirely of marble fragments, columns, cornices, and other ornaments cemented in beds of mortar. Columns are to be had for nothing, and are applied to every purpose; they are even bored and used as cannons.

Here also are the massive ruins of a Christian church dedicated to St. John, and supposed to have been erected by the emperor Theodosius. The internal division into aisles was made by two rows of granite columns, the spoils of former temples; upon them rested the galleries for the women, level with the windows. The walls are of brick intermixed with

(1) *Rev.* ii. 13. I know thy works, and where thou dwellest, even where Satan's seat is.

(2) *Rev.* ii. 13. Antipas was my faithful martyr, who was slain among you.

pieces of ornamental sculpture in stone, and the whole is said to be an excellent specimen of a Greek church. An extensive vault underneath, supported by a great pillar, is now used as a workshop for coarse pottery. There is another ancient church in the town, that of St. Sophia; from its style of architecture it appears to be of very remote antiquity: it is now used as a mosque.

The present population amounts to fifteen thousand, of whom fifteen hundred are Greeks, two hundred Armenians, who have a church, and about a hundred Jews, with a synagogue; the remainder are Turks, whose dwellings are separated from the Greeks by the dry bed of a river. The only Greek church now existing in Pergamos is a poor shed covered with earth, lying on the ascent of the castle hill; and under the same roof a poor priest keeps a school of thirty scholars. The contrast between the magnificent remains of the church of St. John, which lies beneath, and this humble edifice, is as striking as between the poverty of the present state of religion among the modern Greeks, and the rich flood of Gospel light which once shone within the walls of the church of St. John.



PETRA.



PETRA is the Greek name of Selah,¹ the capital of Idumæa, both words meaning a rock ; and never was there a city which bore a more appropriate title, inasmuch as it is hewn entirely out of the sides of a mountain of solid porphyry. The history of Petra is intimately connected with that of the country of which it was the capital. Idumæa derived its name from Edom, or Esau, (the eldest son of Isaac,) a word which signifies red, from the mess of red lentils for which he sold his birthright.² It was a rugged country lying between the south

(1) 2 *Kings* xiv. 7. He slew of Edom in the valley of salt ten thousand, and took Selah by war, and called the name of it Joktheel unto this day.

(2) *Gen.* xxv. 30. And Esau said to Jacob, Feed me, I pray thee, with that same red pottage ; for I am faint : therefore was his name called Edom.

of Palestine and the Elamitic Gulf of the Red Sea: it was also called Seir, and before its conquest by the children of Esau, was inhabited by the Horims,¹ so called from Hor, one of the mountains of Seir, where Aaron died.² The Edomites, at an early period of their history, fulfilled Isaac's prophecy that they should be a warlike people;³ for when the Israelites were on their march from Egypt to Canaan, the Edomites prevented them by force from passing through their land;⁴ thus early too they were governed by kings.⁵ The prophecy that they should be subject to the Israelites⁶ was partially fulfilled in the reign of Saul; but their entire subjugation was left to

(1) *Dent.* ii. 12. The Horims also dwelt in Seir beforetime; but the children of Esau succeeded them, when they had destroyed them from before them, and dwelt in their stead.

(2) *Numb.* xx. 22—28. And the children of Israel, even the whole congregation, journeyed from Kadesh, and came unto mount Hor. And the Lord spake unto Moses and Aaron in mount Hor, by the coast of the land of Edom, saying, Aaron shall be gathered unto his people: for he shall not enter into the land which I have given unto the children of Israel, because ye rebelled against my word at the water of Meribah. Take Aaron and Eleazar his son, and bring them up unto mount Hor: and strip Aaron of his garments, and put them upon Eleazar his son: and Aaron shall be gathered unto his people, and shall die there. And Moses did as the Lord commanded: and they went up unto mount Hor in the sight of all the congregation. And Moses stripped Aaron of his garments, and put them upon Eleazar his son; and Aaron died there in the top of the mount: and Moses and Eleazar came down from the mount.

(3) *Gen.* xxvii. 40. And by thy sword shalt thou live.

(4) *Numb.* xx. 14—21. And Moses sent messengers from Kadesh unto the king of Edom, Thus saith thy brother Israel, Thou knowest all the travel that hath befallen us: how our fathers went down into Egypt, and we have dwelt in Egypt a long time; and the Egyptians vexed us, and our fathers: and when we cried unto the Lord, he heard our voice, and sent an angel, and hath brought us forth out of Egypt: and, behold, we are in Kadesh, a city in the uttermost of thy border: let us pass, I pray thee, through thy country: we will not pass through the fields, or through the vineyards, neither will we drink of the water of the wells: we will go by the king's highway, we will not turn to the right hand nor to the left, until we have passed thy borders. And Edom said unto him, Thou shalt not pass by me, lest I come out against thee with the sword. And the children of Israel said unto him, We will go by the high-way: and if I and my cattle drink of thy water, then I will pay for it: I will only, without doing any thing else, go through on my feet. And he said, Thou shalt not go through. And Edom came out against him with much people, and with a strong hand. Thus Edom refused to give Israel passage through his border: wherefore Israel turned away from him.

(5) *Numb.* xx. 14. The king of Edom.—*Gen.* xxxvi. 31. And these are the kings that reigned in the land of Edom.

(6) *Gen.* xxvii. 29, 40. Let people serve thee, and nations bow down to thee: be lord over thy brethren, and let thy mother's sons bow down to thee. . . . By thy sword shalt thou live, and shalt serve thy brother.

David, who put garrisons throughout all Edom ;¹ thus too was accomplished the remarkable prediction of Balaam.² In the reign of Solomon, the Edomites rebelled, but without success ; for, in the reign of Jehoshaphat, Edom was still governed by a Jewish viceroy.³ About 892 B.C. Edom made another effort to regain its independence,⁴ and so far succeeded that it was never again entirely subject to its rival ; and in the reign of Ahaz it had not only thrown off the yoke, but had assumed the offensive, invading Judah and carrying away captives.⁵ From the time of their first inhospitality towards the Israelites until the latter had recovered their independence, the Edomites appear to have exercised towards them the most implacable hostility ; and when Israel itself was invaded by the Chaldeans, the Edomites did not scruple to lend their aid to the enemy, and exulted in the destruction of their rival.⁶

For this malicious spirit Edom was visited with a severe retribution. The prophet Isaiah foretold that it should exchange its human inhabitants for wild beasts, and that weeds should grow in its palaces and fortresses ;⁷ and several of the

(1) *2 Sam.* viii. 14. And he put garrisons in Edom ; throughout all Edom put he garrisons, and all they of Edom became David's servants.

(2) *Numb.* xxiv. 18. And Edom shall be a possession, Scir also shall be a possession for his enemies ; and Israel shall do valiantly.

(3) *1 Kings* xxii. 47. There was then no king in Edom ; a deputy was king.

(4) *2 Kings* viii. 20—22. In his days Edom revolted from under the hand of Judah, and made a king over themselves. So Joram went over to Zair, and all the chariots with him : and he rose by night, and smote the Edomites which compassed him about, and the captains of the chariots : and the people fled into their tents. Yet Edom revolted from under the hand of Judah unto this day.

(5) *2 Chron.* xxviii. 17. For again the Edomites had come and smitten Judah, and carried away captives.

(6) *Obad.* 11, 12. In the day that thou stoodest on the other side, in the day that the strangers carried away captive his forces, and foreigners entered into his gates, and cast lots upon Jerusalem, even thou wast as one of them. But thou shouldest not have looked on the day of thy brother in the day that he became a stranger ; neither shouldest thou have rejoiced over the children of Judah in the day of their destruction ; neither shouldest thou have spoken proudly in the day of distress.

(7) *Isa.* xxxiv. 5, 11—15. For my sword shall be bathed in heaven : behold, it shall come down upon Idumea, and upon the people of my curse, to judgment . . . But the cormorant and the bittern shall possess it ; the owl also and the raven shall dwell in it : and he shall stretch out upon it the line of confusion, and the stones of emptiness. They shall call the nobles thereof to the kingdom, but none shall be there, and all her princes shall be nothing. And thorns shall come up in

other prophets denounced on it the most terrific visitations of Divine justice, which have been most wonderfully fulfilled.¹ Petra, in particular, which from its solid structure might seem almost to defy decay, was doomed to undergo the most miserable reverse. After the subversion of Judea, the Edomites obtained possession of the south of Palestine, but their own country was invaded by the Nabatheans (the descendants of the eldest son of Ishmael²) who expelled the inhabitants, and having taken, among other towns, Petra, settled in the district called from that city Arabia Petræa. The invaders remained for a long while a powerful nation, and, when Jerusalem was besieged by Titus, were called in to the defence of the temple; but they gave themselves up to the pillage and murder of the more opulent of the citizens, and retired before the siege had actually commenced. After this event no mention of the Idumeans as a nation occurs in history. The ruins of Petra were first made known to Europe by Burckhardt in 1812; a deep valley, called Wady Mousa, extends from east to west, and is watered by a small stream which was anciently confined to its bed by masonry. The first intimation that the traveller is near the site of a great city is afforded by a countless multitude of tombs ornamented with columns and other carvings, but all cut out of the solid rock. The valley soon contracts into a narrow ravine formed by precipitous cliffs, where the screaming of birds of prey, which are very numerous, is almost appalling, and the luxuriant weeds render the road almost impassable.³ Across the entrance of this ravine stretches a bridge of one arch, and about two miles further on is a temple richly carved and in a wonderful state of preservation. Beyond the temple

her palaces, nettles and brambles in the fortresses thereof: and it shall be an habitation of dragons, and a court for owls. The wild beasts of the desert shall also meet with the wild beasts of the island, and the satyr shall cry to his fellow; the screech owl also shall rest there, and find for herself a place of rest. There shall the great owl make her nest, and lay, and hatch, and gather under her shadow: there shall the vultures also be gathered, every one with her mate.

(1) *Jer.* xlix. 17. Also Edom shall be a desolation: every one that goeth by it shall be astonished, and shall hiss at all the plagues thereof.—*Obadiah*.

(2) *Gen.* xxv. 13. The firstborn of Ishmael, Nebajoth.

(3) *Isa.* xxxiv. 11, 13. The cormorant and the bittern shall possess it: the owl also and the raven shall dwell in it. . . . And thorns shall come up in her palaces, nettles and brambles in the fortresses thereof.

the valley again contracts into a pass like the first, which leads to a theatre capable of containing 3,000 spectators. The ruins of the city here burst on the view in their full grandeur, shut in on the opposite side by barren craggy precipices, from which numerous ravines branch out in all directions. The sides of the mountains, covered with an endless variety of tombs and private dwellings, present the most astonishing scene that a traveller can behold,¹ while the believer in Divine Revelation discovers, in the desolation and perpetual ruin around him, evidence of the truth of Prophecy not less convincing than that afforded by the most stupendous miracle.

(1) *Jer.* xlix. 17. See page 87, note (1).



PHILADELPHIA.



PHILADELPHIA, one of the seven churches of Asia, is situated about twenty or thirty miles south-east of Sardis, at the foot of Mount Tmolus. This city was built by Attalus Philadelphus, king of Pergamos, and from him it received its name. It was formerly the second city of Lydia, and when Christianity extended, the inhabitants early embraced the Gospel, and it became one of the churches favourably distinguished by the apostle among the seven. He praises it as that which kept the word of God and denied not His name. An impression rested on the minds of the people, (derived perhaps from a peculiar interpretation of the prophecy¹ pronounced by the apostle,) that their city never had been and never would be

(1) *Rev.* iii. 8—10. I know thy works: behold, I have set before thee an open door, and no man can shut it: for thou hast a little strength, and hast kept my word, and hast not denied my name. Behold, I will make them of the synagogue of Satan, which say they are Jews, and are not, but do lie; behold, I will make

taken. When, therefore, the Mahometans inflicted ruin and desolation on other Christian communities, the inhabitants of Philadelphia regarded them with contempt. Trusting in the strength of their fortifications, they held out against the Turks longer than any other city of Asia Minor, Philadelphia not being taken until 1390.

In the following passage, Gibbon affords remarkable evidence of the fulfilment of the prophecy respecting Philadelphia, "I will keep thee from the hour of temptation." "At a distance from the sea, forgotten by the emperor, encompassed on all sides by the Turks, her valiant citizens defended their religion and freedom above fourscore years; and at length capitulated with the proudest of the Ottomans, in 1390. Among the Greek colonies and churches of Asia, Philadelphia is still erect, a column in a scene of ruins."

The modern name of Philadelphia is Ala-Shaehr, "the high town." It was formerly a city of great strength, having had three walls towards the plain, the innermost of which is yet standing, though, from being in many places broken down and decayed, it no longer serves as a protection. The approach to the city is extremely beautiful; but the passage through the streets is most unpleasant, owing to their filthy condition. The city was anciently built on the sides of several hills; and the ruins which are yet in existence consist for the most part of unhewn stone, massed and cemented together with fragments of old buildings. Many of them are of immense size, and among them are not a few which are said to be the remains of Christian churches. One in particular is pointed out as the Church of the Revelations, and is said to have been dedicated to St. John. All that now exists of this structure is a high stone wall, having the remains of a brick arch at the top, and some pillars, on the sides of which are inscriptions, together with some architectural ornaments and figures of saints. This is undoubtedly a fabric of ancient date, and was probably the earliest Christian church in Philadelphia; but it seems to have been far too splendid to be the work of the despised and desti-

them to come and worship before thy feet, and to know that I have loved thee. Because thou hast kept the word of my patience, I also will keep thee from the hour of temptation, which shall come upon all the world, to try them that dwell upon the earth.

tute worshippers of a crucified Master. If indeed we reflect on the slender means possessed by the early Christians, we can scarcely believe they had it in their power to erect any buildings so substantial that even their foundations could last to the present day.

The view from the elevated parts of the town is magnificent in the extreme ; highly cultivated gardens and vineyards lie at the back and sides of the town, and before it one of the richest and most extensive plains in Syria. In the neighbourhood, poppies are extensively cultivated for the manufacture of opium. Travellers have described a wall of human bones cemented together, near the town, and said to be evidence of the massacre perpetrated by the Turkish tyrant Bajazet, who formed the structure as a monument of the terrible consequences of resisting his will. Recent examination, however, has shown that the supposed bones are in reality petrifications.

Philadelphia still has a little strength, and has kept the word, and has not denied the name of Christ ; consequently, in fulfilment of Divine Prophecy, it has been kept from the hour of temptation. It is the See of a Bishop of the Greek Church, and contains about three hundred Christian families. There are in it twenty-five churches, in five of which Divine service is performed weekly, but in the remainder only once a year. The Christian population is increasing, but the Turkish is on the decrease.



R O M E.



ABOUT the time when Isaiah delivered his prophecies, and when the kingdom of Israel was drawing towards its close, a band of robbers, fugitive slaves, and others, who for their evil deeds had been obliged to flee from their homes, agreed to form a settlement together on the banks of the river Tiber in Italy. They elected for their leader the most daring of their number, and while they were building their city, supported themselves by plunder. In order to strengthen themselves against the inhabitants of the neighbouring villages, they increased their numbers, by inviting to join their party all who were discontented with their lot, or wished to change their residence on any ground whatever. By these means they soon became a compact body of about four thousand souls, resolved to stand by one another, either in committing wrong or defending themselves from punishment. Such was the

beginning of Rome, a state which afterwards extended its sway over the greater part of the inhabited world, and numbered perhaps not less than a hundred and twenty millions of subjects. For the first two hundred and forty-five years of its existence, Rome was governed by kings ; the constitution was then altered, and became a commonwealth, governed by two magistrates, elected annually, and called Consuls. In the course of years, the power of Rome began to be felt abroad ; Carthage, a wealthy and warlike city of Africa, was attacked, and after a series of bloody wars, demolished ; soon after, the Macedonian Empire submitted to the conquering arms of Rome : Asia Minor and Syria followed, Spain likewise was conquered : in a word, wherever the Roman arms penetrated all nations sank before them. This was the fourth kingdom, strong as iron and destined to break in pieces and subdue all things, which was typified in Nebuchadnezzar's dream by the iron feet of the image.¹ This, too, was the fulfilment of Daniel's vision, "a fourth beast, dreadful and terrible, and strong exceedingly ; and it had great iron teeth, and stamped the residue with the teeth of it ; and it was diverse from all the beasts that were before it."² To "devour," to "tread down," and to "break in pieces," was exactly Rome's office among the nations. Every thing must yield and bend to its iron sceptre : all old forms were trampled under foot and forgotten. The magistrates and laws of Rome, which now governed the world, were diverse from all that were before them. Such boundless power and unvarying success, could not but work a change in the possessor. Both the state and individuals began to cast off the stern virtue, and yet sterner justice, which had long characterized them ; they borrowed new sets of morals from the most sensual of the nations, whom they had conquered ; they mixed up with the simple but idolatrous ceremonies of their religion, the most corrupt rites introduced from Egypt and Greece ; the rulers became corrupt and ambitious, the citizens seditious and turbulent, conspiracies

(1) *Dan. ii. 40*. And the fourth kingdom shall be strong as iron : forasmuch as iron breaketh in pieces and subdueth all things : and as iron that breaketh all these, shall it break in pieces and bruise.

(2) *Dan. vii. 7*.

and civil wars became common events, until the state fell under the power of despots, and the Roman empire, though governed by a single hand and outwardly more showy than ever, was inwardly wasting with disease, and hiding within it the seeds of certain decay. In the reign of Augustus Cæsar, when the political existence of Judæa was almost gone, the Prince of Peace was born into the world, in fulfilment of prophecies which had reached the ears even of the idolatrous Romans. By the iniquitous sentence of the Roman Governor He was put to death ;¹ but not before He had wept over Jerusalem, and foretold the terrific fate which hung over His unhappy countrymen,² a fate, too, to be inflicted by those very Romans whom they were content to own as their masters, so that they might work their will on Him.³ Before that generation passed away, the Lord brought against the Jews a nation from far, from the end of the earth, as swift as the eagle flieth, who besieged them in all their gates, until their high and fenced walls came down wherein they trusted,⁴ the Heathen conqueror himself declaring, "It was surely God

(1) *John* xix. 4—6. Pilate therefore went forth again, and saith unto them, Behold, I bring him forth to you, that ye may know that I find no fault in him. Then came Jesus forth, wearing the crown of thorns, and the purple robe. And Pilate saith unto them, Behold the man ! When the chief priests therefore and officers saw him, they cried out, saying, Crucify him, crucify him. Pilate saith unto them, Take ye him, and crucify him : for I find no fault in him.

(2) *Luke* xix. 41—44. And when he was come near, he beheld the city, and wept over it, saying, If thou hadst known, even thou, at least in this thy day, the things which belong unto thy peace ! but now they are hid from thine eyes. For the days shall come upon thee, that thine enemies shall cast a trench about thee, and compass thee round, and keep thee in on every side, and shall lay thee even with the ground, and thy children within thee ; and they shall not leave in thee one stone upon another ; because thou knewest not the time of thy visitation.

(3) *John* xix. 15. But they cried out, Away with him, away with him, crucify him. Pilate saith unto them, Shall I crucify your King ? The chief priests answered, We have no king but Cesar.

(4) *Deut.* xxviii. 49—52. The Lord shall bring a nation against thee from far, from the end of the earth, as swift as the eagle flieth ; a nation whose tongue thou shalt not understand ; a nation of fierce countenance, which shall not regard the person of the old, nor show favour to the young : and he shall eat the fruit of thy cattle, and the fruit of thy land, until thou be destroyed : which also shall not leave thee either corn, wine, or oil, or the increase of thy kine, or flocks of thy sheep, until he have destroyed thee. And he shall besiege thee in all thy gates, until thy high and fenced walls come down, wherein thou trustedst, throughout all thy land : and he shall besiege thee in all thy gates throughout all thy land, which the Lord thy God hath given thee.

himself who expelled the Jews from these fortifications, from which man could never have driven them." To this remarkable evidence of the fulfilment of prophecy, the Emperor Titus added yet another when he returned to Rome, by erecting a triumphal arch to commemorate his conquest, and by ordering it to be decorated with sculptures of the trophies which he took from the Temple. This archway is yet standing, unmistakably marked by the golden candlestick with seven branches, as described by Moses.¹

At the time of our Saviour's coming, there were a great many Jews residing at Rome, and a Christian Church was founded there at an early period; but the city itself was so entirely given up to the grossest idolatry, that it is spoken of by the Apostles Peter and John under the title of Babylon.² For a long period both Jews and Christians were persecuted by the Roman Emperors, but when Constantine became Emperor and was converted to Christianity, the various forms of paganism began to disappear, and kings became "nursing fathers" of the Church, the Nicene Creed being discussed and adopted in his presence. The seat of the Roman Empire was removed by him to the city, which, after his own name, he called Constantinople, A.D. 330. Fifty years afterwards, Theodosius being Emperor, Christianity was fully substituted for the pagan worship, and in a few years more the Roman state was broken up, and fell into the hands of the Goths. Towards the close of the sixth century the Bishop or Pope of Rome assumed the highest spiritual and temporal power, and, with his successors, fulfilled a number of prophecies uttered by Daniel, St. Paul, and St. John.

(1) *Exod.* xxv. 31, 32. And thou shalt make a candlestick of pure gold: of beaten work shall the candlestick be made: his shaft, and his branches, his bowls, his knops, and his flowers, shall be of the same. And six branches shall come out of the sides of it; three branches of the candlestick out of the one side, and three branches of the candlestick out of the other side.

(2) 1 *Pet.* v. 13. The church that is at Babylon, elected together with you, saluteth you.—*Rev.* xvii. 5. And upon her forehead was a name written, MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT.

SAMARIA.



On the revolt of the ten tribes from the house of David, and the setting up of the separate kingdoms of Israel and Judah, Jeroboam rebuilt the old city of Shechem, and made it the seat of government.¹ Tirzah was afterwards the royal residence,² until Omri, the wicked father of the yet more wicked Ahab, “bought the hill Samaria of Shemer for two talents of silver, and built on the hill, and called the name of the city which he

(1) *1 Kings* xii. 25. Then Jeroboam built Shechem in mount Ephraim, and dwelt therein.

(2) *1 Kings* xiv. 17. And Jeroboam's wife arose, and departed, and came to Tirzah.—*1 Kings* xv. 33. In the third year of Asa king of Judah began Baasha the son of Abijah to reign over all Israel in Tirzah, twenty and four years.—*1 Kings* xvi. 15. In the twenty and seventh year of Asa king of Judah did Zimri reign seven days in Tirzah.

built, after the name of Shemer, owner of the hill, Samaria." ¹ Thenceforward, Samaria was the royal city of Israel, and witnessed the depravity of a line of kings, who led astray a people but too willing to be misguided. No wonder, then, that Samaria came in for a large share of the woes denounced on the country generally. Amos foretold woe to them that trusted in the mountain of Samaria; ² Hosea, that her idolatry should cease, and that for her rebellion she should be made desolate; ³ Micah, that she should be made as an heap in the field; ⁴ and Isaiah foretold that she should be despoiled by the Assyrians. ⁵ The kingdom of Israel lasted only 254 years, for in the reign of Hoshea, Shalmaneser, king of Assyria, took the city, carried most of the Israelites away captives, and distributed them through the various cities of Assyria. ⁶ To supply their place, colonists were settled in the land by the conqueror, who mixed with the remnant of the people, and introduced their own idolatrous worship. Being infested with lions, they sent to Assyria for one of the captive priests, under whose directions they united the worship of God with that of their idols. ⁷

(1) 1 *Kings* xvi. 24.

(2) *Amos* vi. 1. Woe to them that are at ease in Zion, and trust in the mountain of Samaria.

(3) *Hos.* viii. 6. The calf of Samaria shall be broken in pieces.—*Hos.* xiii. 16. Samaria shall become desolate; for she hath rebelled against her God.

(4) *Micah* i. 6. Therefore I will make Samaria as an heap of the field, and as plantings of a vineyard: and I will pour down the stones thereof into the valley, and I will discover the foundations thereof.

(5) *Isa.* viii. 4. The spoil of Samaria shall be taken away before the king of Assyria.

(6) 2 *Kings* xvii. 6. In the ninth year of Hoshea, the king of Assyria took Samaria, and carried Israel away into Assyria, and placed them in Halah and in Habor by the river of Gozan, and in the cities of the Medes.

(7) 2 *Kings* xvii. 24—33. And the king of Assyria brought men from Babylon, and from Cuthah, and from Ava, and from Hamath, and from Sepharvaim, and placed them in the cities of Samaria instead of the children of Israel: and they possessed Samaria, and dwelt in the cities thereof. And so it was at the beginning of their dwelling there, that they feared not the Lord: therefore the Lord sent lions among them, which slew some of them. Wherefore they spake to the king of Assyria, saying, The nations which thou hast removed, and placed in the cities of Samaria, know not the manner of the God of the land: therefore he hath sent lions among them, and, behold, they slay them, because they know not the manner of the God of the land. Then the king of Assyria commanded, saying, Carry thither one of the priests whom ye brought from thence; and let them go and dwell there, and let him teach them the manner of the God of the land. Then one of the priests whom they had carried away from Samaria came and dwelt in Beth-el, and taught them how they should fear the Lord. Howbeit every nation made gods of their own, and put them in the houses of the high places which the Samaritans had made,

On the return of the tribe of Judah from the Babylonish captivity, the Samaritans wished to join them in the rebuilding of the Temple.¹ Permission having been refused, they endeavoured to throw every impediment in the way of the Jews, and for some time succeeded ; but when both the Temple and walls of Jerusalem were completed, and when Nehemiah required all the Jews who had married heathen women to divorce their wives, Manasseh, a son of the high-priest, who had married the daughter of Sanballat, governor of Samaria, refused and was banished.² He retired to Samaria, and became high priest of a temple which his father-in-law built on Mount Gerizim. This site was chosen as being the scene of Abraham's and Jacob's sacrifices, and the place fixed on by Moses for the solemn repetition of the blessings on the people, as soon as they should have entered into Canaan.³ The Samaritans from this time abandoned idolatry, and conformed most scrupulously to the law of Moses, though they did not acknowledge any of the other books of the Bible, lest they should admit the superior sanctity of Jerusalem over their own temple. On this account there sprang up a feeling of ill-will between the Jews and Samaritans, which was heightened by the willingness shown by the latter to receive into fellowship with them any Jews who had been banished from Jerusalem for violating the law.

The Samaritans having refused to pay tribute to Alexander the Great, that monarch caused the whole population to be

every nation in their cities wherein they dwelt . . . So they feared the Lord, and made unto themselves of the lowest of them priests of the high places, which sacrificed for them in the houses of the high places. They feared the Lord, and served their own gods, after the manner of the nations whom they carried away from thence.

(1) *Ezra* iv. 1, 2. Now when the adversaries of Judah and Benjamin heard that the children of the captivity builded the temple unto the Lord God of Israel ; then they came to Zerubbabel, and to the chief of the fathers, and said unto them, Let us build with you : for we seek your God, as ye do.

(2) *Neh.* xiii. 28. And one of the sons of Joiada, the son of Eliashib the high priest, was son-in-law to Sanballat the Hlonite : therefore I chased him from me.

(3) *Gen.* xii. 6, 7. And Abram passed through the land unto the place of Sichem, unto the plain of Moreh. And the Canaanite was then in the land. And the Lord appeared unto Abram, and said, Unto thy seed will I give this land : and there builded he an altar unto the Lord, who appeared unto him.—*Gen.* xxxiii. 20. He erected there an altar, and called it El-elohe-Israel.—*Deut.* xxvii. 12. These shall stand upon mount Gerizim to bless the people, when ye are come over Jordan ; Simeon, and Levi, and Judah, and Issachar, and Joseph, and Benjamin.

removed to Shechem or Sychar, (anciently Sychem,) a town situated in the valley between Ebal and Gerizim. Samaria was rebuilt by Herod, (B.C. 25,) who adorned it splendidly, and strongly fortified it. This new city is mentioned in the New Testament, as one of the first Christian Churches, the converts being baptized by Philip the deacon, and confirmed by the Apostles, Peter and John.¹ The ruins of ancient Samaria are placed on an elevated hill, which stands alone in the midst of an extensive hollow, surrounded by higher mountains on every side. They are in the state described by the prophet Amos ;² "the palaces spoiled, and the strength of the people brought down ;" but they are evidently the remains of a magnificent city. St. Jerome says that the prophet Obadiah is thought to have been buried at Samaria. Tradition also fixes here the tombs of Elisha and John the Baptist.

The word Samaria is frequently used in the New Testament to denote the central of the three divisions of Palestine, which took its name from the ancient city. The Samaritan woman, with whom our blessed Lord conversed at Jacob's well,³ was an inhabitant of Shechem, mentioned above. She did not at all overstate the feeling which existed between the Jews and her nation, for at that time the word Samaritan was used as a term of reproach ;⁴ and intercourse with a Samaritan was considered as an offence deserving punishment.

(1) *Acts* viii. 5, 14—17. Then Philip went down to the city of Samaria, and preached Christ unto them. . . . Now when the apostles which were at Jerusalem heard that Samaria had received the word of God, they sent unto them Peter and John : who, when they were come down, prayed for them, that they might receive the Holy Ghost : (for as yet he was fallen upon none of them : only they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus.) Then laid they their hands on them, and they received the Holy Ghost.

(2) *Amos* iii. 11. Therefore thus saith the Lord God ; An adversary there shall be even round about the land ; and he shall bring down thy strength from thee, and thy palaces shall be spoiled.

(3) *John* iv. 5—9. Then cometh he to a city of Samaria, which is called Sychar, near to the parcel of ground that Jacob gave to his son Joseph. Now Jacob's well was there. Jesus therefore, being wearied with his journey, sat thus on the well : and it was about the sixth hour. There cometh a woman of Samaria to draw water : Jesus saith unto her, Give me to drink. (For his disciples were gone away unto the city to buy meat.) Then saith the woman of Samaria unto him, How is it that thou, being a Jew, askest drink of me, which am a woman of Samaria ? for the Jews have no dealings with the Samaritans.

(4) *John* viii. 48. Then answered the Jews, and said unto him, Say we not well that thou art a Samaritan, and hast a devil.

The present name of Shechem is Nabulus. The city is beautifully situated in a very fertile neighbourhood, and in a long narrow valley, formed by Mounts Gerizim and Ebal, which rise on each side to the height of eight hundred feet. The houses are of stone, and well built. At the mouth of the valley on the south is "Jacob's Well," or the "Well of the Samaritan woman," over which there formerly stood a large Christian church, of which the foundations alone are just perceptible. The well is arched over with an old stone vault, and within this is the mouth of the well, covered with a flat stone. About a hundred yards off is Joseph's tomb, greatly venerated even by the Mahometans, who have built a small temple over it. Few travellers question the truth of the tradition which gives the above names to these interesting spots. The part of the city nearest to Gerizim is inhabited by the professed followers of the doctrines of the ancient Samaritans, who continue to be strict observers of the Mosaic Law, and still worship on the mountain where their fathers worshipped. On the summit of the mountain is a tract of table land, on which are the ruins of an immense structure of hewn stones, bearing every appearance of having been once a strong fortress. There are also here extensive foundations and old cisterns, which appear to have belonged to an ancient city. But the most interesting spot is a bare surface of rock, partly encircled by the foundations of a wall, which perhaps belonged to the ancient temple. This the Samaritans consider their holiest spot, and hither they come four times a year to worship. When absent from home, on whatever side of it they may be, they always turn their faces to it in prayer. So devoted are they still to the observance of forms, rather than accept the privilege of "worshipping the Father in Spirit and in truth!"

SARDIS.



SARDIS, the ancient capital of the kingdom of Lydia, is situated on the river Pactolus, in the fertile plain below Mount Tmolus. Wealth, pomp, and luxury characterized this city from very ancient times. The story of Crœsus, its last king, is frequently alluded to by profane historians, as affording a remarkable example of the instability of human greatness. This monarch considered himself the happiest of human beings, but being checked by the philosopher Solon for his arrogance, dismissed him from his court with disgrace. Not long afterwards, led away by the ambiguous answers of the oracles, he conducted a large army into the field against Cyrus, the future conqueror of Babylon, but was defeated and obliged to return to his capital, where he shut himself up. Hither he was soon followed, and besieged by Cyrus with a far inferior force ; but, at the expiration of fourteen days, the citadel, which had been deemed impregnable, was taken by a stratagem, and Crœsus was condemned to the flames. When the sentence was about

to be executed he was heard to invoke the name of Solon, and the curiosity of Cyrus being excited, he asked the cause, and having heard his narrative, ordered him to be set free, and subsequently received him into his confidence.

Under the Romans, Sardis declined in importance, and, being destroyed by an earthquake, for some time lay desolate, until it was rebuilt by the Roman Emperor Tiberius.

The inhabitants of Sardis bore an ill name among the ancients for their voluptuous habits of life, and it appears from the denunciation of St. John, that the majority of the members of the Christian Church in that place were led away by the evil example of the heathen.¹ There were a few only who kept the faith, and though to them the promise was confirmed that they should be clothed in white raiment,² there were not enough righteous found to save the Church from the fearful denunciation pronounced upon it.

The situation of Sardis is very beautiful, but the country over which it looks is now almost deserted, and the valley is become a swamp. Its little rivers of clear water, after turning two or three mills, serve only to flood the country instead of draining and beautifying it. The hill of the citadel, when seen from the opposite bank of the Hermus, appears of a triangular form, and at the back of it rises ridge after ridge of mountains, the highest covered with snow, and many of them bearing evident marks of having been jagged and distorted by earthquakes. The citadel is exceedingly difficult of ascent; but the magnificent view which it commands of the plain of the Hermus, and other objects of interest, amply repays for the risk and fatigue. The village, small as it is,

(1) *Rev.* iii. 1—3. And unto the angel of the church in Sardis write; These things saith he that hath the seven Spirits of God, and the seven stars; I know thy works, that thou hast a name that thou livest, and art dead. Be watchful, and strengthen the things which remain, that are ready to die: for I have not found thy works perfect before God. Remember therefore how thou hast received and heard, and hold fast, and repent. If therefore thou shalt not watch, I will come on thee as a thief, and thou shalt not know what hour I will come upon thee.

(2) *Rev.* iii. 4, 5. Thou hast a few names even in Sardis which have not defiled their garments; and they shall walk with me in white: for they are worthy. He that overcometh, the same shall be clothed in white raiment; and I will not blot out his name out of the book of life, but I will confess his name before my Father, and before his angels.

boasts of containing one of the most remarkable remains of antiquity in Asia, namely, the vast Ionic temple of the heathen goddess Cybele, or the Earth, on the banks of the Pactolus. In 1750, six columns of this temple were standing, but four of them have since been thrown down by the Turks, for the sake of the gold which they expected to find in the joints. Those which still remain are remarkable for the beauty and finish of the decorations, and the enormous size of the stones of which they are constructed. One which was supported by the two columns represented in the engraving, is estimated to weigh twenty-five tons. The foundations of the temple are buried many feet below the surface, by the soil which has for centuries been accumulating in the valley. There are also remains of a theatre and race-course, as well as of a palace, said to have been that of Cræsus. This last consists of long rooms with circular ends, and enclosed by brick walls ten feet and a half thick, the largest room being no less than one hundred and fifty-six feet in length and forty-two wide. But the objects of greatest interest to the Christian traveller, are the ruins of two churches, one of which is called the church of St. John. The other is almost entirely constructed of magnificent fragments of earlier edifices, and is the most perfect of all the ancient churches of Asia.

Two or three mills, and a few mud huts, inhabited by Turkish herdsmen, contain all the present population of Sardis. The only Christians are two servants of a Turkish miller; so that the candlestick may be said to have been utterly removed from Sardis; a sad warning to all who have the name of living and are dead; that is, to those who are Christians only in name.

SIDON.



SIDON, called by the Hebrews Zidon, appears to have been the first of the Phœnician cities founded by Canaan, the son of Ham.¹ In the time of Joshua it had attained such importance as to be distinguished by the title of "The Great."² Its inhabitants are mentioned among the nations which were suffered to remain in the land, that the Lord might prove Israel, whether they would keep the way of the Lord or not,³ a test which they were not able to stand.⁴

(1) *Gen. x. 15, 19.* And Canaan begat Sidon his first-born. . . . And the border of the Canaanites was from Sidon, as thou comest to Gerar, unto Gaza.

(2) *Josh. xi. 8.* And the Lord delivered them into the hand of Israel, who smote them, and chased them unto great Zidon.

(3) *Judges i. 31.* Neither did Asher drive out the inhabitants of Accho, nor the inhabitants of Zidon.—*Judges ii. 22.* That through them I may prove Israel, whether they will keep the way of the Lord to walk therein, as their fathers did keep it, or not.—*Judges x. 12.* The Zidonians also, and the Amalekites, and the Maonites, did oppress you; and ye cried to me, and I delivered you out of their hand.

(4) *Judges x. 6.* And the children of Israel did evil again in the sight of the Lord, and served Baalim, and Ashtaroth, and the gods of Syria, and the gods of

It is probable that Sidon sent out colonies at a very early period, for the neighbouring city, which is called in Joshua¹ "the strong city Tyre," was supplied with rowers and merchants from this place.² The Sidonians were employed by David in aiding him to make preparations for the building of the Temple; and the poet Homer (who probably lived about B.C. 900) speaks of them as rich merchants, trading in curious wares, and skilled in navigation and the arts of civilized life. In after ages Sidon was surpassed in power by its rival Tyre; but it is worthy of remark that the two cities are frequently mentioned together, both in sacred and profane writings.

Upon the invasion of Palestine by Salmaneser, in the reign of Hezekiah, the Sidonians revolted from the Tyrians, and submitted to the conqueror, to whom they became tributary, but were still governed by a king.³ The prophet Jeremiah foretold that Sidon should fall into the hands of Nebuchadnezzar,⁴ which it did at the time of the siege of Tyre by that monarch; and Ezekiel denounced the judgments of God in the shape of pestilence and the sword.⁵ This last prophecy was fulfilled about 350 B.C., when, the Persian viceroy having revolted, the Persian king Ochus came against Sidon with a large army, and the inhabitants, to avoid falling into his hands, set fire to the city and perished, to the number of

Zidon, and the gods of Moab, and the gods of the children of Ammon, and the gods of the Philistines, and forsook the Lord, and served not him.

(1) *Josh.* xix. 29. And then the coast turneth to Ramah, and to the strong city Tyre.

(2) *Ezek.* xxvii. 8. The inhabitants of Zidon and Arvad were thy mariners: thy wise men, O Tyrus, that were in thee, were thy pilots.—*Isa.* xxiii. 2. Be still, ye inhabitants of the isle; thou whom the merchants of Zidon, that pass over the sea, have replenished.

(3) *Jer.* xxvii. 3. And send them to the king of Edom, and to the king of Moab, and to the king of the Ammonites, and to the king of Tyrus, and to the king of Zidon.

(4) *Jer.* xxvii. 6. And now have I given all these lands into the hand of Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon, my servant.

(5) *Ezek.* xxviii. 20—23. Again the word of the Lord came unto me, saying, Son of man, set thy face against Zidon, and prophesy against it, and say, Thus saith the Lord God; Behold, I am against thee, O Zidon; and I will be glorified in the midst of thee: and they shall know that I am the Lord, when I shall have executed judgments in her, and shall be sanctified in her. For I will send into her pestilence, and blood into her streets; and the wounded shall be judged in the midst of her by the sword upon her on every side; and they shall know that I am the Lord.

40,000 men, besides women and children. It was afterwards rebuilt, and attained considerable importance, but never regained its former splendour or its independence: for all the future conquerors of Syria mastered it without opposition. After being several times in the hands of the Syrians and Egyptians alternately, it fell under the power of the Romans, and in the time of our blessed Lord was a moderately wealthy city. About A.D. 44 it was sufficiently important to have incurred Herod's displeasure,¹ and not long afterwards it appears to have contained Christian converts.² Of the many branches of industry and trade for which it was anciently noted, one always remained in Sidon—namely, the manufacture of much fine glass, for which the sand of this coast was peculiarly adapted. At the time of the Crusades this city was taken by the Christians; was retaken by Saladin; and, after having changed hands several times, was laid waste by the Saracens. Shortly afterwards it was restored by the French king, Louis IX., and for a long time continued to be a place of some importance; but it is now sunk to an inconsiderable place, known by the name of Saida. The present town, which when seen from a distance presents an imposing appearance, lies on a promontory, on the north side of a hill, the summit of which is crowned by the ruins of a castle said to have been built and surrounded with a wall by Louis IX. West of the hill stands a large old church, which has been converted into a mosque. The houses are large, but the streets, like those of all the Turkish towns, are ill built, dirty, and full of ruins. It is enclosed on the land side by a wall, which runs across the promontory from sea to sea, and is kept in tolerable repair. The inner harbour was choked up by the Druse Emir, Fahkredine, when he established an independent power, and wished to prevent the Grand Seignior from landing with a maritime force. Large vessels lie in the outer harbour, where they are

(1) *Acts* xii. 20. And Herod was highly displeased with them of Tyre and Sidon: but they came with one accord to him, and, having made Blastus the king's chamberlain their friend, desired peace; because their country was nourished by the king's country.

(2) *Acts* xxvii. 3. And the next day we touched at Sidon. And Julius courteously entreated Paul, and gave him liberty to go unto his friends to refresh himself.

protected by a ledge of rocks from the south-west winds, but exposed to the north. Outside the town, on a rock in the sea, is a castle of the time of the Crusades, the form of which is in part adapted to that of the rock. It is connected with the shore at the northern end of the city, by a stone causeway, with nine arches, lying between the inner and outer ports. The neighbouring country is exceedingly beautiful, and abounds in gardens and groves of mulberries, bananas, and other fruit-trees. As long as Saida was the trading port of Damascus it was much frequented by merchants, especially the French ; but within the last five-and-twenty years it has been superseded by the flourishing city of Beirout, and is now little frequented.

We must not forget, when we meditate on the fall of Sidon, the yet more grievous fate denounced by our blessed Lord¹ on those who do not heed the call to a holy life, which if that city had been privileged to hear, it would have repented long ago in sackcloth and ashes.

(1) *Matt.* xi. 21, 22. Woe unto thee, Chorazin ! woe unto thee, Bethsaida ! for if the mighty works, which were done in you, had been done in Tyre and Sidon, they would have repented long ago in sackcloth and ashes. But I say unto you, It shall be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon at the day of judgment, than for you.



SMYRNA.



SMYRNA, the second of the Seven Churches of Asia, is mentioned next after Ephesus, most probably because it was nearest to it. It is a very ancient city, situated on the east coast of Lydia, at the extremity of a gulf called the gulf of Smyrna, and near the mouth of the river Meles. At a very early period of its history it was destroyed by the Lydians, and lay waste until the time of Alexander the Great. It was rebuilt about two miles to the north of the old city, and in the time of the first Roman Emperors was one of the finest cities of Asia, and was the court of justice for all the district of *Æolis*. Smyrna was in this prosperous condition when a Christian Church was founded here, the members of which, though poor in this world's goods, were rich in faith.¹ It was foretold to

(1) *Rev.* ii. 9. I know thy works, and tribulation, and poverty, (but thou art rich,) and I know the blasphemy of them which say they are Jews, and are not, but are the synagogue of Satan.

them that they should suffer for the name of Christ, and have tribulation for ten *days*,¹ that is, *prophetic years*; a prophecy which was fulfilled during the persecution of Diocletian, which lasted for that time, and fell very heavily on this as on others of the Eastern Churches. But together with these tidings of coming adversity was coupled the comforting promise, "Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life."

In the year 170 the Church of Smyrna afforded an example of devotion to the faith which agrees nobly with the character given to it in the Sacred Volume. A persecution was raised by order of the Roman Emperor, and the chief magistrate of Smyrna was ordered to expose to wild beasts or to burn at the stake all those who professed the Christian religion. A number of persons accused of the crime of belonging to the hated sect were called on to deny their faith, and on their refusal they were cruelly tortured by scourging and being pierced with nails or thorns; but still continuing steadfast, they were thrown to wild beasts. Last of all, the aged Polycarp was brought forward, who, it is said, was a disciple of St. John, and had been appointed Bishop of Smyrna by the beloved Apostle. The Roman magistrate, moved at the affecting sight, and anxious to save the courageous old man, advised him to conceal his name, and offered to release him if he would but swear by the Emperor's good fortune and defy Christ. Polycarp answered, "Fourscore and five years have I been His servant, yet in all this time hath He not so much as once hurt me; how, then, may I speak evil of my King and Sovereign Lord who hath brought me salvation?" The magistrate replied, "I have wild beasts to which I will throw thee, unless thou take a better way." This threat serving only to strengthen him in the way that he had chosen, the magistrate added, "I will tame thee with fire if thou heed not the wild beasts." Then said Polycarp, "You threaten me with fire, which shall burn for the space of an hour and shall be within a little while after put out and

(1) *Rev.* ii. 10. Fear none of those things which thou shalt suffer: behold, the devil shall cast some of you into prison, that ye may be tried; and ye shall have tribulation ten days: be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life.

extinguished ; but you know not the fire of the judgment to come, and of everlasting punishment, which is reserved for the wicked and ungodly. But why make you all these delays ? Give me what death soever you list." While standing at the stake, to which he was soon after bound, he uttered the following prayer. " O Father of Thy Well-Beloved and Blessed Son Jesus Christ, by Whom we have attained the knowledge of Thee, the God of angels and powers, and of every creature, and of all just men which live before Thee, I give Thee thanks that Thou hast vouchsafed to grant me this day that I may have my part among the number of martyrs in the cup of Christ, unto the resurrection of eternal life, both of body and soul, through the operation of the Holy Spirit, among whom I shall this day be received into Thy sight for an acceptable sacrifice : and as Thou hast prepared and revealed the same before this time, so Thou hast accomplished the same, O Thou most true God, Which canst not lie. Wherefore, I in like case for all things praise Thee, bless Thee, and glorify Thee by our everlasting Bishop Jesus Christ, to Whom be glory evermore. Amen." Thus was this holy man faithful unto death ; and who can doubt that there has been given to him a crown of life ?

Smyrna was destroyed by an earthquake seven years after this event, but the Emperor Aurelius caused it to be rebuilt in more than its former splendour. It afterwards, however, repeatedly suffered from earthquakes. There are few places in the Turkish dominions which have, in proportion to their size, so great a population as Smyrna, and it is the most thriving town in the Levant, with respect both to export and import trade. It is a better built town than Constantinople, and is still improving, substantial stone houses being now generally erected instead of wooden buildings. The number of inhabitants amounts to about 130,000, among whom there is so large a population of Christians as to render the town unclean in the eyes of strict Mahometans, who call it Infidel Izmir, the latter name being a corruption of Smyrna. It stands at the foot of a range of mountains which enclose it on three sides. The only ancient ruins are upon the mountains behind the town and to the south. Upon the highest summit stand the

ruins of an old castle, which are supposed to mark the site of the second city. There are at present very few other remains of antiquity, though they were formerly very abundant. The great resort of foreigners to Smyrna, and the facility of removing articles of all kinds, have helped to strip the old city of all interesting remains. In the way down from the old castle just mentioned, the site of the Amphitheatre is still pointed out, where St. Polycarp gained his crown ; and the tomb of the same martyr, in a chapel at no great distance, is annually visited in procession by the Christians, who, with good reason, hold the memory of this venerable man in high honour.



THEBES.



EGYPT, the land of Ham,¹ whose descendants peopled it, was prophetically connected with the history of God's chosen people many years before the descent of Joseph; that event as well as the Exodus having been foretold by God to Abraham.² Even after the settlement of the Israelites in the land of Canaan, on which it bordered, Egypt continued to be mixed up with the history of that people, either from being employed by God in the punishment of their disobedience, or sometimes being received into alliance by them, and offering a ready temptation to idolatry, the besetting sin of Israel.

(1) *Ps.* cv. 23. Israel also came into Egypt; and Jacob sojourned in the land of Ham.

(2) *Gen.* xv. 13, 14. And he said unto Abram, Know of a surety that thy seed shall be a stranger in a land that is not theirs, and shall serve them; and they shall afflict them four hundred years; and also that nation, whom they shall serve, will I judge: and afterward shall they come out with great substance.

The existence of Egypt, as a habitable country, depends on the river Nile, which annually brings down from the mountains of Abyssinia a large quantity of rich soil, and, overflowing its banks, both waters the country and supplies it with manure. The husbandman has consequently little more to do than to scatter the seed, and reap the abundant produce. From the earliest times, it often happened that when neighbouring countries suffered from want of rain, and were afflicted with famine, Egypt, watered by its bountiful river, was exempt from a like calamity, and was visited by strangers who came to procure corn.¹ The inhabitants having no occasion to devote a large portion of time to laborious works, applied themselves at a very early period to the study of the arts and sciences ; hence Egypt was celebrated for its wisdom,² and was frequented by the philosophers of Greece and other countries who came hither to study : and the greatest praise bestowed on Solomon's wisdom was, that it " excelled the wisdom of Egypt."³ The vast number of ancient architectural remains still existing in Egypt prove the perfection which this science attained ; and the various works of art, discovered in the temples and tombs, afford evidence of the skill of the Egyptian workmen in other respects. Numerous paintings have been also discovered, containing representations of persons engaged in various occupations, and showing that the arts of civilized life were well understood.

Little is known of the early history of Egypt beyond what we learn from the Sacred Volume : we read of a Pharaoh in the time of Abraham,⁴ another in the time of Joseph,⁵ and of a new

(1) *Gen.* xii. 10. And there was a famine in the land : and Abram went down into Egypt to sojourn there ; for the famine was grievous in the land.—(*Gen.* xli. 57. And all countries came into Egypt to Joseph for to buy corn ; because that the famine was so sore in all lands.

(2) *Acts* vii. 22. And Moses was learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians, and was mighty in words and in deeds.

(3) *1 Kings* iv. 30. And Solomon's wisdom excelled the wisdom of all the children of the east country, and all the wisdom of Egypt.

(4) *Gen.* xii. 15. The princes also of Pharaoh saw her and commended her before Pharaoh : and the woman was taken into Pharaoh's house.

(5) *Gen.* xxxix. 1. And Joseph was brought down to Egypt ; and Potiphar, an officer of Pharaoh, captain of the guard, an Egyptian, bought him of the hands of the Ishmeelites, which had brought him down thither.

line of kings bearing the same name soon after.¹ Solomon married the daughter of a Pharaoh, and in the reign of his son and successor, Rehoboam, Shishak, king of Egypt, took Jerusalem, and robbed the temple and the king's palace of their principal treasures.² Egypt had also committed acts of violence against Israel, in conjunction with Edom, on which account it was threatened with desolation.³ Hoshea, the last king of Israel, made an effort to save himself from the king of Assyria, by forming an alliance with Egypt,⁴ but the prophet Isaiah showed the folly of trusting in chariots and horsemen, instead of the Holy One of Israel. Even the pious king Hezekiah was reproached by the Assyrian ambassador for depending on the same alliance,⁵ but the holy monarch showed that he trusted in a surer Protector.⁶ At a subsequent period, Josiah took part in a contest between the kings of Assyria and Egypt, and was slain.⁷ His successor, Jehoahaz, was dethroned by Pharaoh-nechoh, who made Jehoiakim regent of Judæa, and retained his influence until the country passed into the hands of the king of Babylon,⁸ soon after which, Egypt became a province of the same empire.

(1) *Exod* i. 8, 11. Now there arose up a new king over Egypt, which knew not Joseph. . . . Therefore they did set over them taskmasters to afflict them with their burdens. And they built for Pharaoh treasure cities, Pithom and Raamses.

(2) *1 Kings* xiv. 25, 26. And it came to pass in the fifth year of king Rehoboam, that Shishak king of Egypt came up against Jerusalem: and he took away the treasures of the house of the Lord, and the treasures of the king's house; he even took away all: and he took away all the shields of gold which Solomon had made.

(3) *Joel* iii. 19. Egypt shall be a desolation, and Edom shall be a desolate wilderness, for the violence against the children of Judah, because they have shed innocent blood in their land.

(4) *2 Kings* xvii. 4. And the king of Assyria found conspiracy in Hoshea: for he had sent messengers to So king of Egypt, and brought no present to the king of Assyria, as he had done year by year: therefore the king of Assyria shut him up, and bound him in prison.

(5) *2 Kings* xviii. 21. Now, behold, thou trustest upon the staff of this bruised reed, even upon Egypt, on which if a man lean, it will go into his hand, and pierce it: so is Pharaoh king of Egypt unto all that trust on him.

(6) *2 Kings* xix. 19. Now therefore, O Lord our God, I beseech thee, save thou us out of his hand, that all the kingdoms of the earth may know that thou art the Lord God, even thou only.

(7) *2 Kings* xxiii. 29. In his days Pharaoh-nechoh king of Egypt went up against the king of Assyria to the river Euphrates: and king Josiah went against him; and he slew him at Megiddo, when he had seen him.

(8) *2 Kings* xxiii. 33. And Pharaoh-nechoh put him in bands at Riblah in the land of Hamath, that he might not reign in Jerusalem: and put the land to a tri-

The prophecies of the fate of Egypt are remarkable alike for their clearness and their literal fulfilment. Its conquest by Nebuchadnezzar was predicted by Ezekiel, and even the time of its lying desolate.¹ Forty years after this event, it was subdued by Cyrus the Persian, conqueror of Babylon ; and his successors, tyrants though they were, did their utmost to bring Egyptian idolatry into contempt.² Alexander the Great subverted the Persian power in Egypt, and during the reign of his successors, the Ptolemies, "an altar to the Lord was raised in the midst of the land"³—the Jews being encouraged to observe their own religion in Egypt, and the Septuagint translation of the Bible being made for their use. A consecrated city was even selected by Onias, a lineal descendant of the Jewish high-priests, and an altar erected on the model of that which stood in the Temple.

A remarkable prediction of Ezekiel, that Egypt should be the basest of kingdoms, and should never again have a prince of its own,⁴ has ever since been undergoing fresh fulfilments. We have already seen that Egypt passed under the sway of the Babylonians, Persians, and Macedonians. History informs us that it afterwards became a province of Rome; when the

bute of an hundred talents of silver, and a talent of gold.—2 *Kings* xxiv. 7. And the king of Egypt came not again any more out of his land: for the king of Babylon had taken from the river of Egypt unto the river Euphrates all that pertained to the king of Egypt.

(1) *Ezek.* xxix. 12, 18, 19. And I will make the land of Egypt desolate in the midst of the countries that are desolate, and her cities among the cities that are laid waste shall be desolate forty years: and I will scatter the Egyptians among the nations, and will disperse them through the countries. . . . Son of man, Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon caused his army to serve a great service against Tyrus: every head was made bald, and every shoulder was peeled: yet had he no wages, nor his army, for Tyrus, for the service that he had served against it: therefore thus saith the Lord God; Behold, I will give the land of Egypt unto Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon; and he shall take her multitude, and take her spoil, and take her prey; and it shall be the wages for his army.

(2) *Isa.* xix. 1. The burden of Egypt. Behold, the Lord rideth upon a swift cloud, and shall come into Egypt: and the idols of Egypt shall be moved at his presence, and the heart of Egypt shall melt in the midst of it.

(3) *Isa.* xix. 19—21. In that day shall there be an altar to the Lord in the midst of the land of Egypt, and a pillar at the border thereof to the Lord. And it shall be for a sign and for a witness unto the Lord of hosts in the land of Egypt: for they shall cry unto the Lord because of the oppressors, and he shall send them a Saviour, and a great one, and he shall deliver them. And the Lord shall be known to Egypt, and the Egyptians shall know the Lord in that day, and shall do sacrifice and oblation; yea, they shall vow a vow unto the Lord, and perform it.

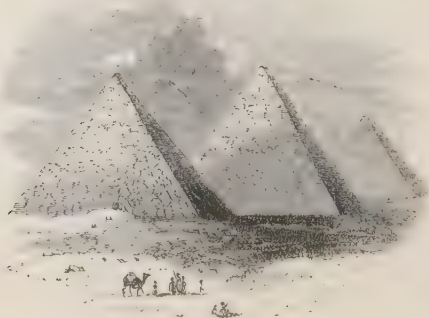
(4) *Ezek.* xxix. 15.

Romans ceased to bear rule, it became more and more a base kingdom ; its famous library, containing seven hundred thousand volumes, was destroyed, and the learned ceased to frequent it. In the thirteenth century the Mamelukes succeeded to the sovereign authority of Egypt : and lastly, in the sixteenth century, the Turks conquered it and annexed it to the Ottoman Empire, and it is governed by a Turkish viceroy at the present time.

The character of the inhabitants is described by ancient authors as utterly degraded, and recent accounts notice little improvement. Society consists but of two classes, oppressors and oppressed, but both are equally ignorant and immoral. A great part of the country, which was formerly in a high state of cultivation, is now unproductive ; and hovels of mud are almost the only habitations, where the ruins of temples and palaces abound. Thus is Egypt become desolate in the midst of the countries that are desolate, and her cities in the midst of the cities that are wasted.¹ Thebes, the capital of Egypt, was probably the most ancient city in the country. That part of it which lay on the eastern bank of the Nile, was called No, and that on the western bank, Pathros.² Thebes is now only noted for containing the most stupendous ruins in the world.

(1) *Ezek.* xxx. 7.

(2) *Ezek.* xxx. 14. And I will make Pathros desolate, and will set fire in Zoan, and will execute judgments in No.



THYATIRA.



THYATIRA, a city of Lydia, and one of the seven churches of Asia, lies between Pergamos and Sardis, at the base of a beautiful mountain, in an extensive plain through which flows the river Lycus, now called Goerduk. It was founded by a Macedonian colony, and anciently called Pelopia. It does not occupy an important place in history, but is cursorily alluded to in the account of the Roman wars, as the place where Antiochus collected his forces to meet the formidable invaders of Asia ; he was defeated at Magnesia, when Thyatira, with the surrounding country, fell under the power of the Romans. Thyatira was the birth-place of Lydia, a seller of purple, whom the Apostle Paul, during his travels in Greece, met at Philippi, and converted to Christianity,¹ and who hos-

(1) *Acts* xvi. 14, 15, 40. And a certain woman named Lydia, a seller of purple, of the city of Thyatira, which worshipped God, heard us : whose heart the Lord opened, that she attended unto the things which were spoken of Paul. And when she was baptized, and her household, she besought us, saying, If ye have judged me to be faithful to the Lord, come into my house, and abide there. And she constrained us . . . And they went out of the prison, and entered into the house of Lydia : and when they had seen the brethren, they comforted them, and departed.

pitably entertained Paul and Silas after their release from prison. Among the ruins of the ancient city there has been discovered an inscription in honour of one Antonius Claudius Alphenus, erected by the corporation of dyers. Hence it would appear that the occupation of Lydia was one which was extensively practised at Thyatira, and it is not improbable that at the time she met the Apostle, she was travelling to seek a market for her merchandise. Purple or scarlet from the East was highly prized both by the Greeks and Romans. The latter employed it as the distinctive dress of their kings; and subsequently, under the Republic, it was worn by the consuls and other superior magistrates: the emperors also adopted it as the symbol of sovereignty. Tyrian purple was that which was most highly valued; but there can be little doubt that a great deal that was sold under that name, was either bartered or purchased by the Tyrians, and re-sold as the manufacture of their own country. Thyatira, under its modern name of Ak-hissar, or "the white castle," still maintains its reputation for this manufacture, large quantities of scarlet cloth being sent weekly to Smyrna.

The church of Thyatira was highly commended by St. John for its Christian virtues,¹ but was nevertheless threatened with a terrible punishment unless its members withdrew from the teaching, and shunned the example, of a wicked woman, either named Jezebel, or resembling that vile person in character. How that denunciation was accomplished may be inferred from the fact that the very site of Thyatira was unknown until about 150 years ago, when its name was discovered by an inscription on some ruins. The approach to modern Thyatira from the west passes through a low and marshy country occupied only by wild fowl. For some miles the road is paved with stones rounded by the rivers, but occasionally lined at the edges with marble cornices and beautifully

(1) *Rev.* ii. 18—20. And unto the angel of the church in Thyatira write; These things saith the Son of God, who hath his eyes like unto a flame of fire, and his feet are like fine brass; I know thy works, and charity, and service, and faith, and thy patience, and thy works; and the last to be more than the first. Notwithstanding I have a few things against thee, because thou sufferest that woman Jezebel, which calleth herself a prophetess, to teach and to seduce my servants to commit fornication, and to eat things sacrificed unto idols.

cut stones ; and in the burial-ground at the entrance of the town are numerous pieces of granite columns stuck in the ground as Turkish gravestones. The appearance of the city itself is that of a very long line of cypresses, poplars, and other trees, among which appear the minarets of several mosques, and the roofs of a few houses. It abounds with relics of a former splendid city, although there is not a trace of the actual site of any ruin or early building ; the streets are in places paved with fragments of carved stone, capitals of columns may every where be seen converted into troughs, and for two miles out of the town the mouths of the wells are formed of the capitals of extremely fine Corinthian pillars, the bucket being drawn through holes cut in the centre. These remains evidently belonged to a variety of buildings, and some appear to have formed a part of the interior ornament of the church.

Thyatira is a large place, and abounds with shops of every description. It contains about three hundred Greek houses, thirty Armenian, and one thousand Turkish ; nine mosques, one Armenian church and one Greek. The latter is a wretchedly poor place ; and so much under the level of the churchyard, as to require five steps to descend into it. The site of the ancient church is unknown ; but the Turks speak of several great buildings of stone, under ground, which are occasionally met with when excavations are made. The city is well supplied with water, which flows from a neighbouring hill through every street. The inhabitants are principally supported by manufacturing cotton wool, which is sent to Smyrna. This flourishing trade, the abundance of excellent water, the salubrity of the air, and the rich and delightful country, make this city a much more agreeable residence than any of her desolate and comfortless sisters.

TYRE.



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NOTHING is known of the early history of Tyre, except that it was founded by colonists from Sidon,¹ and that it was a "strong city" in the time of Joshua.² This was old Tyre, situated on the mainland in the southern part of the coast of Phœnicia. The new city was built on an island, the outer extremity of which was somewhat above a mile from the coast. The precise date of its erection is uncertain, but it was in existence before the building of Solomon's temple, and, probably, like old Tyre, owed its erection to a Sidonian colony, who were driven from their own country and settled there about 1250 B.C. The new city probably soon surpassed the old in greatness and magnificence, but the descriptions of Tyre which we meet with in the books of the prophets, though in

(1) *Isa.* xxiii. 2, 12. Be still, ye inhabitants of the isle; thou whom the merchants of Zidon, that pass over the sea, have replenished. . . O thou oppressed virgin, daughter of Zidon.

(2) *Josh.* xix. 29. And then the coast turneth to Ramah, and to the strong city Tyre.

some places they refer distinctly to the one or the other, may be considered, in a great degree, equally applicable to both the old and new cities.

In its most prosperous days Tyre had risen to such greatness that she gave kings to several of her dependent colonies,¹ and traded in the most valuable produce of all known parts of the world.² The Scriptural account of the magnificence of Tyre is borne out by ancient profane authors, who highly extol the purple dye which was among its staple manufactures.³ Its mariners visited the most remote shores then known, bringing gold from Ophir, in the south of Arabia ;⁴ silver from Tarshish or Tartessus in Spain ;⁵ and slaves from the shores of the Mediterranean.⁶ While Tyre yet stood in this proud state, the prophets Joel⁷ (B.C. 800) and Amos⁸ (B.C. 787) foretold its destruction by fire and the enslaving of its inhabitants. Isaiah (B.C. 715) denounced against it the same fate ;⁹ and when Ezekiel (B.C. 588) uttered his fearful denunciation, its fate was drawing near. So terribly and so accurately were his prophecies fulfilled almost immediately after they were uttered, that none but the wilfully blind could fail to be convinced that the more distant events which he foretold were certainly approaching. During a period of thirteen years Nebuchadnezzar was employed in the siege of the devoted city ; at the expiration of which time, when his army was well nigh

(1) *Isa.* xxiii. 8. Who hath taken this counsel against Tyre, the crowning city, whose merchants are princes, whose traffickers are the honourable of the earth ?

(2) *Ezek.* xxvii.

(3) *Ezek.* xxvii. 7. Blue and purple from the isles of Elishah was that which covered thee.

(4) *1 Kings* ix. 28. And they came to Ophir, and fetched from thence gold, four hundred and twenty talents, and brought it to king Solomon.

(5) *Ezek.* xxvii. 12. Tarshish was thy merchant by reason of the multitude of all kind of riches ; with silver, iron, tin, and lead, they traded in thy fairs.

(6) *Ezek.* xxvii. 13. Javan, Tubal, and Meshech, they were thy merchants : they traded the persons of men and vessels of brass in thy market.

(7) *Joel* iii. 7, 8. Behold, I will raise them out of the place whither ye have sold them, and will return your recompense upon your own head : and I will sell your sons and your daughters into the hand of the children of Judah, and they shall sell them to the Sabeans, to a people far off.

(8) *Amos* i. 9, 10. Thus saith the Lord ; For three transgressions of Tyrus, and for four, I will not turn away the punishment thereof ; because they delivered up the whole captivity to Edom, and remembered not the brotherly covenant : but I will send a fire on the wall of Tyrus, which shall devour the palaces thereof.

(9) *Isa.* xxiii.

exhausted, he gained possession of it, but was scarcely rewarded for his pains,¹ the inhabitants having removed their most valuable effects to the new city. Old Tyre never recovered its magnificence, but the insulated city retained its importance until the time of Alexander the Great, who, after a siege of seven months, took it by the help of a causeway constructed out of the materials of the old city,² burnt it to the ground, and destroyed or enslaved all the inhabitants; and thus was accomplished all that was wanting to fulfil the denunciations of the prophets. Tyre afterwards rose again from its ruins, and, in the hands of "many nations,"³ continued to be a place of great strength until A.D. 1291, when it surrendered to the Egyptians and was razed to the ground.

Tyre is memorable in New Testament history as having been visited by our blessed Lord and his Apostles, as well as for the affecting interview between St. Paul and the Christian converts on the occasion of his perilous journey to Jerusalem.⁴ It became a metropolitan see at an early period, and when Palestine was recovered from the infidels, (A.D. 1124,) it received for its archbishop an Englishman, William of Tyre. For more than 160 years it remained in the possession of the Christians, thus fulfilling the prophecy that "her merchandise and her hire should be holiness unto the Lord."⁵ After its destruction by the Egyptians several attempts were made to raise it from its degradation, but they failed. Thenceforth men said,

(1) *Ezek. xxix. 18.* Son of man, Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon caused his army to serve a great service against Tyrus: every head was made bald, and every shoulder was peeled: yet had he no wages, nor his army, for Tyrus, for the service that he had served against it.

(2) *Ezek. xxvi. 12.* And they shall make a spoil of thy riches, and make a prey of thy merchandise: and they shall break down thy walls, and destroy thy pleasant houses: and they shall lay thy stones and thy timber and thy dust in the midst of the water.

(3) *Ezek. xxvi. 3.* Therefore thus saith the Lord God; Behold, I am against thee, O Tyrus, and will cause many nations to come up against thee, as the sea causeth his waves to come up.

(4) *Acts xxi. 3—5.* Now when we had discovered Cyprus, we left it on the left hand, and sailed into Syria, and landed at Tyre: for there the ship was to unlade her burden. And finding disciples, we tarried there seven days: who said to Paul through the Spirit, that he should not go up to Jerusalem. And when we had accomplished those days, we departed and went our way; and they all brought us on our way, with wives and children, till we were out of the city: and we kneeled down on the shore, and prayed.

(5) *Isa. xxiii. 18.*

“What city is like Tyrus, like the destroyed in the midst of the sea?”¹ The present state of Tyre is described by travellers scarcely less accurately than by the prophets of old. Modern Tyre, or Soor, which ought rather to be called a village than a town, embraces scarcely two-thirds of the former island. It is situated on a peninsula, the isthmus of which, being composed of an entirely different soil from the old island, affords enduring evidence of the labours of Alexander, though it is covered with traces of the foundations of mediæval buildings. On the north side of the island is to be seen nothing but a Babel of broken walls, pillars, and vaults, there being not so much as one entire house left. Its present inhabitants are only a few poor fishermen, harbouring themselves in the vaults, and drying their nets on the ruined palaces of the “honourable of the earth.”² Various fragments of the city wall yet remain; but the once wealthy port is becoming daily more and more filled up with sand, so that only boats can now enter it. The only houses now existing there are wretched huts, one story high, ready to crumble to pieces; and such is the sloth of the inhabitants that the few miserable gardens on the western side contain far more weeds than useful plants. The shore is strewn from one end to the other, along the edge of the water and in the water, with columns of red and grey granite, the only remaining monuments of its ancient splendour. The most remarkable among the ruins is one at the south-east corner, which was formerly a Christian church, and was probably built by the crusaders. A part of the choir only is now standing. But enough remains to show that the church was built in the shape of a cross. Tyre has indeed become “like the top of a rock, a place to spread nets upon.” The sole remaining tokens of her ancient splendour lie strewn beneath the waves, in the midst of the sea; and the few hovels which now nestle upon a portion of her site present no contradiction of the dread decree, “Thou shalt be built no more.”³ “There is nothing here,” said a poor native woman to a recent traveller, “but poor people, and nothing to look at but the sea.”

(1) *Ezek.* xxvii. 32.

(2) *Ezek.* xxvi. 5. It shall be a place for the spreading of nets in the midst of the sea.—*Isa.* xxiii. 8.

(3) *Ezek.* xxvi. 14.

MOUNT ZION.



FROM the earliest times, it has been the custom of pious men to consider as holy places those chosen spots in which God has made Himself known to men, or which have been once set apart for religious worship. Thus the ancient town of Luz, after the appearance of the Angels to Jacob,¹ was called Bethel, (House of God ;) and Mount Horeb, where the Lord appeared to Moses in a burning bush, was made the scene

(1) *Gen.* xxviii. 16—19. And Jacob awaked out of his sleep, and he said, Surely the Lord is in this place; and I knew it not. And he was afraid, and said, How dreadful is this place! this is none other but the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven. And Jacob rose up early in the morning, and took the stone that he had put for his pillows, and set it up for a pillar, and poured oil upon the top of it. And he called the name of that place Bethel: but the name of that city was called Luz at the first.

both of the first sacrifice offered by the Israelites after their departure from Egypt,¹ and of the delivery of the Law,² and was called "the mount of God" five hundred years after the solemn events which took place on it.³ In like manner, the mountain on which Abraham was commanded to offer up his son Isaac,⁴ was never divested of its sacred character, being afterwards pointed out by God as the site of the Temple,⁵ the sign of such election being the staying of the destroying Angel's hand at the threshing-floor of Araunah, or Ornan, the Jebusite.

The general name of Zion was given to the elevated ground on which the entire city of Jerusalem was built, and which was surrounded on three sides, the east, south, and west, by a deep precipitous valley, called, in different parts of its course, the valley of Kedron or Jehoshaphat, the valley of Ge-Hinnom, and the valley of Gihon. On the north, Zion gradually sloped and formed an undulating plain, naturally divided by hollows into four distinct hills constituting distinct quarters of the city. These four hills were named Zion (proper), Akra, Moriah, and Bezetha. Of these Zion was the loftiest, and was separated from Moriah by a broad ditch over which there was a bridge. On Zion lay the upper town, the castle of David,⁶ (captured by him from the Jebusites,) the palace of the high-priest, and

(1) *Exod.* iii. 12. When thou hast brought forth the people out of Egypt, ye shall serve God upon this mountain.—*Exod.* xvii. 15. And Moses built an altar, and called the name of it Jehovah-nissi.

(2) *Exod.* xix. 20. And the Lord came down upon mount Sinai, on the top of the mount.

(3) *Exod.* iii. 1. Now Moses kept the flock of Jethro his father-in-law, the priest of Midian: and he led the flock to the backside of the desert, and came to the mountain of God, even to Horeb. —1 *Kings* xix. 8. And he arose, and did eat and drink, and went in the strength of that meat forty days and forty nights unto Horeb the mount of God.

(4) *Gen.* xxii. 14. And Abraham called the name of that place Jehovah-jireh: as it is said to this day, In the mount of the Lord it shall be seen.

(5) *Deut.* xii. 5. But unto the place which the Lord your God shall choose out of all your tribes to put his name there, even unto his habitation shall ye seek, and thither thou shalt come. — *Ps.* lxxviii. 68. But chose the tribe of Judah, the mount Zion which he loved. —2 *Chron.* iii. 1. Then Solomon began to build the house of the Lord at Jerusalem in mount Moriah, where the Lord appeared unto David his father, in the place that David had prepared in the threshing-floor of Ornan the Jebusite.

(6) 2 *Sam.* v. 7. Nevertheless David took the strong hold of Zion: the same is the city of David.

other public, as well as the principal private, buildings. Moriah was at first an irregular height, and consequently, when the Temple was to be built on it, required to be made fit for the purpose by the elevation of its eastern side, and prodigious levellings which still excite astonishment. It was completely covered with the buildings connected with the Temple, on the north-west side of which the Maccabee high-priest, Simon, built the elevated tower, afterwards called Antonia. It was strongly fortified, and connected with the Temple by steps and a secret passage. The whole of this part of the city, including Zion and Moriah, was surrounded by a high and strong wall.

The Temple of Solomon was a gorgeous structure, remarkable rather for the beauty and costliness of its materials than for its size. The ground plan was an oblong, about 120 feet long and 40 wide; the inside walls and the ceilings were lined with cedar, beautifully carved, representing cherubim, palm trees, clusters of foliage, &c. but no figures of animals. The whole interior was overlaid with gold, so that neither wood nor stone was seen, and nothing met the eye but pure gold, either plain, as on the floor, or richly chased, and adorned with the gems they had brought with them from Egypt.¹ The style of architecture probably was Egyptian, and the cost of the structure was, at the lowest computation, not less than seven millions sterling. Around it ran a colonnade in which were the residences of the priests, and the whole was surrounded by a series of buildings, and courts of various denominations. Round this central part of the Temple there ran a large square covered colonnade, called the court of the Gentiles, because no one but a Jew could go beyond it.² This Temple, after having been plundered several times, was finally demolished by Nebuchadnezzar on the destruction of the kingdom of Judah, and was rebuilt by the Jewish colony which returned from the Babylonish captivity under Ezra and Nehemiah, but in a style so much poorer, that many of the old Israelites who recollected

(1) *Exod.* xii. 35. And the children of Israel did according to the word of Moses; and they borrowed of the Egyptians jewels of silver, and jewels of gold, and raiment.

(2) *Luke* xviii. 13. And the publican, standing afar off, would not lift up so much as his eyes unto heaven, but smote upon his breast, saying, God be merciful to me a sinner.

the splendour of the ancient building could not refrain from tears while laying the foundations of the new one,¹ but were consoled by the promise that it should be visited by the long expected Messiah.² Herod the Great, in the eighteenth year of his reign, partly to gratify his own taste, and partly to gain the favour of the Jews, who hated him, devoted large sums of money to the work of restoring it to much of its early magnificence, and to the erection of courts and halls for the learned to assemble in.³ These were completed in about eight years, but the outer buildings were not finished till the reign of Herod Agrippa, forty-six years after the commencement of the works.⁴ It was against this building, adorned as it was with "goodly stones and gifts," that our blessed Lord denounced the fate which he could not contemplate without tears,⁵ but which to most of His hearers seemed as idle words. Before that generation passed away, all was fulfilled. On the capture of the city by the Romans, Titus was very desirous of preserving the temple as a monument of his dearly purchased victory; but the Jews, not willing that it should fall into his hands, set fire to the porticoes, and one of the Roman soldiers, throwing a lighted torch through a window, fired the Temple itself, and when the troops were commanded to extinguish the conflagration, they refused. Thus, against the will of the conqueror, it was consumed, and its very foundations were

(1) *Ezra* iii. 12. But many of the priests and Levites and chief of the fathers, who were ancient men, that had seen the first house, when the foundation of this house was laid before their eyes, wept with a loud voice.

(2) *Hag.* ii. 6—9. For thus saith the Lord of hosts; Yet once, it is a little while, and I will shake the heavens, and the earth, and the sea, and the dry land; and I will shake all nations, and the desire of all nations shall come: and I will fill this house with glory, saith the Lord of hosts. The silver is mine, and the gold is mine, saith the Lord of hosts. The glory of this latter house shall be greater than of the former, saith the Lord of hosts: and in this place will I give peace, saith the Lord of hosts.

(3) *Luke* ii. 46. And it came to pass, that after three days they found him in the temple, sitting in the midst of the doctors, both hearing them, and asking them questions. — *Acts* v. 42. And daily in the temple, and in every house, they ceased not to teach and preach Jesus Christ.

(4) *John* ii. 20. Then said the Jews, Forty and six years was this temple in building, and wilt thou rear it up in three days?

(5) *Luke* xix. 41, 42. And when he was come near, he beheld the city, and wept over it, saying, If thou hadst known, even thou, at least in this thy day, the things which belong unto thy peace! but now they are hid from thine eyes.

afterwards dug up, so that not one stone was left standing on another.

Several attempts were made by the Jews to rebuild the Temple, but they signally failed : and the Roman Emperor Julian, (A. D. 362) in order to annoy the Christians, favoured a renewed attempt ; but his workmen were deterred by frightful balls of fire, which burst from the foundations, and not only killed some of the workmen, but made all approach to the place impossible. Under Constantine, Jerusalem came into the hands of the Christians, who erected a Church on the site of the Temple. This was converted into a Mosque by the Caliph Omar, the third successor of Mahomet, and was considered next in sanctity to the Temple at Mecca. The Crusaders again made it a Christian Church, but at the close of the brief period of their rule the Sultan Saladin caused it to be purified with rose-water, and restored the worship of the false prophet. So literally is the prophecy of Jeremiah fulfilled, " I have forsaken mine house, I have left mine heritage, I have given the dearly beloved of my soul into the hand of her enemies." ¹

(1) *Jer.* xii. 7.

THE END.





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